University of Alberta

The Challenge of Militant Right-Wing Extremism to Contemporary Social Movement Theory

by

Xavier Cattarinich

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

Department of Sociology

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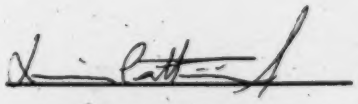

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled *The Challenge of Militant Right-Wing Extremism to Contemporary Social Movement Theory* by Xavier Cattarinich in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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ABSTRACT

The author of this thesis constructs a synthetic model of Right-wing (White supremacist) movement emergence by discussing and criticizing the propositions of the leading social movement research paradigms (the new social movement paradigm, the resource mobilization paradigm, and relative deprivation theory) in light of existing empirical work on German and American Right-wing movements. Right-wing movements arise when a political opportunity converges with broad structural change. Structural changes often manifest themselves as challenges to the established cultural repertoires of specific collectivities. "Threatened" social groups experience cultural crises in terms of relative deprivation, which provides the impetus for social movement formation. Groups that are able to muster adequate material resources are more likely to adopt an organizational form and to pursue action at the institutional level, whereas groups that are lacking in material resources are more likely to pursue noninstitutional action. The model requires further research for empirical confirmation.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Review of the Literature

Statement of the Research Problem

In 1993, Tore Bjørgo and Rob Witte (1993:15) noted the paucity of comparative international research that existed in the field of racist violence at the time. They defined racist violence as "any violence [terrorist attacks, street violence, vandalism of property, threats, and verbal abuse and gestures] in which victims are selected because of their ethnic, 'racial', religious, cultural or national origin" (Bjørgo and Witte, 1993:6). They added:

> The victims are attacked not in their capacities as individuals, but as representatives of such groups which are normally minorities in terms of numbers as well as in terms of power. Buildings, properties and institutions may also be attacked because they represent these groups or their interests. (Bjørgo and Witte, 1993:6)

Other researchers refer to racist violence as hate crimes (Levin and McDevitt, 1993) or xenophobic violence (Watts, 1997). I will use these terms interchangeably throughout this thesis.

Since Bjørgo and Witte first observed the lack of comparative research that deals with racist violence, academics have published a number of volumes that the authors purport are "comparative" and "international" on the broader subject of Right-wing extremism, which is often implicitly related to racist violence (e.g., see Bjørgo, 1995b; Braun and Scheinberg, 1997; Kitschelt, 1995; Merkl and Weinberg, 1993, 1997). Although Michi Ebata (1997b:13) states that "Right-wing extremism is a broad concept that is not static or precise," he offers a working definition of Right-wing extremism that I will adopt throughout this thesis. According to Ebata (1997b):

> Right-wing extremists are identified first and foremost by their fundamental expression of hatred, bigotry, or prejudice rooted in an "ideology of inequality." This hatred is an expression of a worldview that divides society into those who belong and those who do not. It is specifically manifested as racism, xenophobia, homophobia, misogyny, and religious intolerance. In most cases it is also directed specifically against the state. (pp. 13-14)

Ebata (1997b:18) acknowledges that these characteristics are not necessarily exclusive to the extreme Right. He argues that the distinguishing factor between Right-wing extremists on the one hand, and neoconservatives and Left-wing radicals who incorporate various themes of intolerance in their respective

discourses on the other, is that the former rely on fascism as a source of historical *inspiration* (Ebata, 1997b:21). Drawing on the work of Noël O'Sullivan among other scholars, Ebata (1997b:21) defines fascism as "an ideology based on natural history, the pursuit of an expansionary and aggressive geopolitical policy, and corporate statism." More specifically:

> The state serves one homogeneous ethnic grouping and aims to reincorporate and reunite any members of that grouping located outside its borders. Fascism is furthermore identified with a cultist worship of and obedience to a charismatic leader, total devotion to the state, an admiration of strength accompanied by a fascination with militarism, and an overwhelming reliance on propaganda. (Ebata, 1997b:21)

Violent skinhead, White supremacist, and neo-Nazi groups are the most prominent representatives of the contemporary extreme Right (when one defines the latter according to the criteria mentioned above). The reader should be aware that "Rightist thought" and "Rightist movements" are not invariably rooted in an "ideology of inequality" (i.e., racism), nor are they necessarily inspired by fascism (see the section on the components of "Right-wing thought" and "extremism" that appears later in this chapter). Some scholars therefore propose definitions of Right-wing extremism that do not include racism as a defining criterion. This study, however, is only concerned with the racist groups that I mentioned above. Thus, Ebata's definition of Right-wing extremism is appropriate in the context of this study. Also, the reader should note that this thesis will focus exclusively on the loosely organized, "underground" militant Right-wing extremist groups that operate beyond the realm of institutional politics, thereby excluding official political parties from the analysis.

My original intention was to explain comparatively how the socio-cultural contexts of the United States and Germany have influenced the emergence of the Right-wing groups that currently thrive within their respective borders. A major obstacle to this endeavour is the (surprising) lack of sociological research on contemporary Right-wing extremist groups. Political scientists, historians, and "popular writers" (i.e., journalists and other non-academic authors) have conducted the bulk of the existing research on the extreme Right. Furthermore, much of the research is empirical rather than theoretical. Yet as this thesis will illustrate, Right-wing extremist groups emerge due to more than political considerations and they do not rely exclusively on political means to achieve their objectives. That as to say, they are not merely concerned about obtaining greater access to societal decision making processes (i.e., the political process),

nor do they seek to obtain their goals by following conventional political avenues. Many Right-wing extremists are actively *articulating distinct socio-cultural identities that are hostile to the domain of institutional politics*. These factors alone make them worthy of sociological inquiry. Thus, in order to provide greater structure to investigations of the extreme Right and to stimulate further sociological investigation into the topic, sociology must develop a theoretical framework to guide scholarly inquiries. I therefore will develop such a framework in this thesis. Although I will ground my framework in social movement theory, I will argue that we must revise contemporary social movement theory if it is to account for the emergence and growth of Right-wing extremist movements.

Methodology

This thesis consists primarily of a theoretical critique of social movement theory. It will review the state of the art in sociological research on social movements and will then illustrate the shortcomings of contemporary social movement theory in light of observations concerning Right-wing extremism. My sources of information on Right-wing extremism consist of existing academic and non-academic research on the American and German Right-wing movements, on specific organizations within these broader movements, and on the socio-cultural and historical contexts out of which they have emerged. A comparative international dimension is essential to this project because some scholars (e.g., see Mayer, [1991] 1995:170, 190) contend that the dominant American paradigm, resource mobilization theory, is not entirely applicable to the European context. The inclusion in my analysis of Right-wing movements that are rooted in different social contexts will enable me to determine the extent to which one can synthesize European and American approaches to the study of (specific) social movements into a cohesive socio-cultural model of movement emergence and growth. Also, I will focus on the U.S. and Germany because these countries have historically produced the most visible Right-wing extremist movements, as well as the greatest amount of literature on these movements.

The Components of "Right-Wing Thought" and "Extremism"

Conventional definitions of "Right-wing thought" associate one or several of the following elements to the term: the defense of an *ancien régime*; the pursuit of capitalism and private property ownership (and hence a belief in the inevitability of inequality in society); support for authoritarianism and a rigid behavioural code; a tendency to support nationalism, racism, and/or militarism; and a belief in the innate aggressiveness, competitiveness, and sinfulness of humans (Eatwell, 1990a; Krejčí, 1991). Without going into any details, historical evidence has demonstrated that none of the elements listed above are unequivocal and exclusive hallmarks of Right-wing thought (for examples, see Eatwell, 1990a, 1990d; Krejčí, 1991). Also, today one often finds elements that writers have considered as being a part of "Left-wing thought" in the discourse of so-called "Right-wingers" (e.g., environmental concerns in the discourse of German neo-Nazis [Scott, 1990:97; Schmidt, 1993:8]). In spite of the ambiguities they claim are inherent in Left/Right terminology, neither Jaroslav Krejčí nor Roger Eatwell are able to come up with suitable alternate labels for movements that observers currently group under the heading of "Right-wing." Nevertheless, although there is doubt as to whether there is any validity to the application of a "Right-wing" label to racist skinheads, White supremacists, and neo-Nazis, scholars continue to designate the movements I will study in this project as members of the extreme Right. Indeed, members of these groups themselves overtly identify with the Right (e.g., see Finch, 1983:8; Schmidt, 1993:182). Thus, as a matter of both consistency and convenience, I too will refer to racist skinheads, White supremacists, and neo-Nazis as Right-wing extremists.

As far as the "degrees of radicalism" are considered, Eatwell (1990b) defines them in ideal typical terms. The reactionary Right "defends a return to an *ancien régime*, or an idealized past" (Eatwell, 1990b:63). Eatwell cites the legitimist Right that emerged after the French Revolution to defend the aristocratic, religious, and authoritarian principles of pre-Revolution France as the archetype of the reactionary Right. The reactionary Right is, in other words, intolerant toward change. The moderate Right, in contrast with the reactionary Right, is not averse to change. Eatwell (1990b) cites the philosophy of Edmund Burke as most representative of "moderate Right thought":

> Burke's views were evolutionary; he sought to temper the nostalgia of the reactionary, and the imagination of the revolutionaries. In their place he preached the value of authority based on tradition, countered by a sense of inevitable progress. Instead of absolutist government on the one hand, or mass activism on the other, he preached the cause of limited government. . . . [I]f the hallmark of archetypal reactionaries is intolerance, that of the moderate right is balance - a way between extremes, but never so defined as to become its own form of extremism. (p. 66)

Eatwell finds that the "radical" and "extreme" Rights are more difficult to define. That is to say, there is less agreement on their respective meanings. According to Eatwell (1990b:69), two salient features of the radical Right are its commitment to activism and its attempts to justify something that does not yet exist. Due to the historical relationship between activism and change, which is a part of the Leftist agenda, activism has been antithetical to reactionary and moderate Right-wing thought. Activism (originally directed against socialism) in which the radical Right is engaged is effectively something observers view as "radical," when compared to "traditional Right-wing behaviour." Secondly, Right-wing radicals believe that they (and their nation) have a special destiny, and therefore are not dedicated to reviving the "ways of old," as is the reactionary Right. Eatwell (1990b:71) states that the most important factor that distinguishes Right-wing extremists from radicals is that the former are inclined to espouse conspiracy theories. Indeed, the majority of Right-wing extremists on both sides of the Atlantic believe in a conspiracy theory that postulates that ZOG (Zionist Occupation Government), a secret Jewish cabal, controls financial institutions and governments around the world (Weinberg, 1997:237). Otherwise, the principles of the former are similar to those of the latter.[1]

Eatwell (1990b:75) himself notes that reality seldom conforms to these ideal types: "it is impossible to fit every single movement, thinker or ideology neatly into five varieties of the right." (The fifth variety is the "New Right," which is more relevant to the realm of institutional politics than to the current discussion. For a more detailed treatment of this subject, see Eatwell [1990b:73-74, 1990c]). Some authors, like Leonard Weinberg (1993b:4) and Herbert Kitschelt (1995), use the terms "radical" and "extreme" interchangeably when discussing the Right, although the latter draws a line between contemporary Right-wing movements and the historical Fascist and National Socialist movements.

In Germany, the Federal Constitutional Court generally equates extremism with actions and doctrines that contravene the principles of the Basic Law and that are hence anti-constitutional, and with

anti-democratic actions and doctrines in particular. Some researchers suggest that anti-constitutional and anti-democratic actions and doctrines are a fundamental part of any definition of extremism. Yet reliance on a definition of extremism that is predicated on the components of anti-democratic/anti-constitutional action and doctrines makes a comparison of Right-wing extremist activity in the U.S. and Germany difficult. Geoffrey Roberts (1994) comments:

> the concluding definitional problem is to decide whether the democratic constitutional order which [extremist] groups oppose or deny is particular, or general; is the definition of extremism universal, or German? Taking the definitions of the Federal Constitutional Court in the famous and pioneering decision to ban the right-wing Socialist Reich Party (SRP) in 1952 (cited in Pfahl-Traughber, in Backes and Jesse, eds., 1992:69), or the formulation of Interior Minister Maihofer that extremism was directed not against the whole of the Basic Law but against its central tenets (*Kernbestand unserer Staatsverfassung*) (cited in Backes, 1989:88), it could be claimed that it is the particular conglomeration of fundamental democratic principles as laid down in the Basic Law which is the touchstone for extremism. On the other hand, Backes and others claim that extremism is a general concept relating to the principles of any democratic constitutional order, that it is a universal phenomenon (Backes and Jesse, 1989: vol. I:18; vol. II:33) and that it can include 'legalistic' groups which present outward and visible signs of compliance with constitutional provisions, but which are opposed to the moral basis of the constitutional order (Pfahl-Traughber, 1993:25-6). If such a universal definition is accepted, though, it does bring one back to the issue raised above, concerning the 'relative' quality of the concept. Since the basic rights and pattern of democratic institutions vary not insignificantly from democratic constitution to democratic constitution (consider France in the twentieth century or the Weimar Republic, or 'constitutionless' Britain), surely a group which might be extremist in one country might not be so described in another (or in the same country at two different periods: e.g. suffragettes in Britain before and after 1918). . . . [F]or all the claims to be dealing with a concept of universal validity, 'extremism' is primarily a concept defined in relation to the particular version of the democratic constitutional order – with all its institutions, procedures and values which make it a 'combative democracy' (*streitbare Demokratie*) – which is incorporated in the Basic Law of the Federal Republic, rather than something which comfortably can be applied to any democracy at any time . . . (pp. 466-67)

The quote is lengthy, but I believe it is worth reproducing in full. It reveals that one should limit the German Federal Constitutional Court's definition of "extremism" to the context of present day Germany. Yet one can find a definition of extremism that is broader than the one described above, but which is nevertheless generally consistent with the intent of the German Federal Constitutional Court's definition. For the purposes of this thesis, this definition should refer more to the conduct of individuals than to the values upheld by a particular political order.

Eatwell defined his ideal types in terms of the content of their beliefs. Yet I agree with Laird Wilcox (in George and Wilcox, 1996:54-55) when he writes that it is the structure and rigidity of one's

beliefs, more so than the content of one's beliefs, that should determine the degree to which one is or is not an extremist. Wilcox remarks that:

> In the twenty-five years that I have been investigating political groups of the left and right, I have found that most people can hold radical or unorthodox views and still entertain them in a more or less reasonable, rational, and nondogmatic manner. On the other hand, I have met people whose views were fairly close to the political mainstream but were presented in a shrill, uncompromising, bullying, and distinctly authoritarian manner. The latter demonstrated a starkly extremist mentality while the former demonstrated only ideological unorthodoxy . . . (in George and Wilcox, 1996:54)

Wilcox adopts Roger Scruton's criteria for determining the presence or absence of extremism. According to Scruton, "extremism" involves:

1. Taking a political idea to its limits, regardless of unfortunate repercussions, impracticalities, arguments, and feelings to the contrary, and with the intention not only to confront, but to eliminate opposition.
2. Intolerance toward all views other than one's own.
3. Adoption of means to political ends which show disregard for the life, liberty and human rights of others. (cited in George and Wilcox, 1996:54)

Kathy Marks (1996:17) and Hans-Georg Betz (1994:3) suggest that violent activism (including rhetoric) differentiates the extreme Right from the comparatively less aggressive radical Right. I will adopt Scruton's definition of extremism and the distinction that Marks and Betz have made between the radical and extreme Rights throughout the rest of this thesis. Thus, the groups and movements I will refer to in this study are Right-wing extremists by virtue of their *self-identification with a vaguely defined Rightist ideological orientation that is characterized by a resistance to social change as well as an affinity to conspiracy theories, and by virtue of the rigidity of their beliefs and their willingness to pursue their socio-political ends with violent means*. This definition, however, may lead some to question whether one cannot equally consider members of other groups, such as violent pro-life advocates in the abortion debate (see Kaplan, 1995a), as belonging to the extreme Right. Although one may certainly make a compelling case that violent pro-life advocates are an example of a specific type of Right-wing extremist, I will restrict the scope of my study to those informal groups that adhere explicitly to racist and/or anti-Semitic principles. From here on, *whenever I refer to the extreme Right, I have in mind that section of the "movement" that is dedicated to racist and/or anti-Semitic principles*.

Right-Wing Extremism and Xenophobic Violence

It is important to develop theoretical tools that will enable us to conduct more rigorous sociological studies of the extreme Right because violence perpetrated by the extreme Right in Europe and North America appears to have increased both in frequency and intensity in the 1990s. According to Meredith Watts (1997:67), the rate of violence against foreigners in both East and West Germany nearly doubled between 1991 and 1992. In 1992, the Office for the Protection of the Constitution recorded 2,584 racially motivated attacks throughout Germany, including 17 murders and 800 attacks causing injury (Mushaben, 1996:242). When we compare these figures to the 103 racially motivated violent offences (including 1 homicide) recorded in the old Federal Republic of Germany in 1989 and the 128 violent offences (including 2 murders) recorded there in 1990 (Jensen, 1993:82), we can appreciate the significance of this dramatic increase in racist violence. Although violence against foreigners reached a peak in 1992 and then steadily declined in 1993 and 1994, nonviolent racist offences (e.g., propaganda) and anti-Semitic offences (with the exception of physical violence and cemetery desecration) increased during that same period (Kagedan, 1997:116-17; Watts, 1997:68). Pre-unification figures on violence in the former GDR are unavailable, but observers agree that there as well its magnitude is greater now than it was prior to reunification (Hockenos, 1993:3; for a discussion of Right-wing violence in the former GDR, see M. Behrend, 1995:204; Kagedan, 1997:111-12).

In spite of methodological problems that threaten the validity and consistency of "hate crime statistics," observers contend that the wave of racist violence that plagues Germany is relatively recent and is, if anything, underreported. Bjørgo and Witte (1993:5) maintain "that much racist violence never gets reported at all, nor is it often registered specifically as racist," which is probably the result of "a lack of agreement within the police with respect to defining 'racist crime.'" In light of Schmidt's (1993; also see Neaman and Funke, 1993; Ostow, 1995:96, note 21) observations that the German police have not only sympathized and cooperated with neo-Nazi activists, but also that individual officers have participated in attacks on refugee shelters (Ostow, 1995:102, note 33; Schmidt, 1993:100), I would add that the victims of racist violence may themselves be reluctant to report their victimization to the authorities. Thus, one can

reasonably suspect that official figures underestimate the true extent of racist violence, whether in Germany or elsewhere. That the concept of "racist violence" is indeed valid is evident when we consider that many German neo-Nazis no longer conceal their allegiance and objectives. Rather, they openly carry out their violent deeds to "inspire" prospective followers (Schmidt, 1993:38; also see Willems, 1995:166). Racist violence is also a concern in other European nations, such as the Netherlands (van Donselaar, 1993), Great Britain (Gordon, 1993), France (Lloyd, 1993), Romania (Hockenos, 1993: chapter 5; Reemtsma, 1993), Hungary (Hockenos, 1993: chapters 3-4), the Czech Republic (Hockenos, 1993: chapter 6), Poland (Hockenos, 1993: chapter 7) and the Scandinavian countries (Bjørgo, 1993a, 1993c; "Police arrest," 1997; Lööw, 1993), to name but a few.

The problem is just as serious in the United States:

> According to a study done by the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), there were 7,600 hate-crime incidents reported by police departments around the United States in 1993. Racial bias was behind 62% of the incidents, which involved intimidation, vandalism, and assaults. According to the study, blacks were the most common racial targets; they were victims in 2,476 incidents . . . The FBI said the figures they gathered are conservative because only a small number of the nation's police forces, responsible for 56% of the U.S. population, reported hate crimes. ("Colour clashes," 1996)

Between 1995 and the first half of 1996, over 30 Black churches were burned down in the U.S. in racially motivated incidents, a tactic reminiscent of neo-Nazi attacks on refugee shelters in Germany ("Colour clases," 1996). Uniform Crime Report data indicate that of the 10,702 hate crimes that were reported to the police in the U.S. in 1996, 68.6% (7,342) were classified as offences against the person (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1997:58). Although one should not downplay the significance of racist street violence, sensationalistic, large-scale acts of violence are the ones that first come to mind when we think of violence perpetrated by the extreme Right in America. Indeed, the magnitude and frequency of these acts is greater in the U.S. than anywhere else in the Western world. Recent examples of both attempted and successful large-scale (or at the very least well publicized) acts of Right-wing violence include the botched 1985 Covenant, Sword, and Arm of the Lord conspiracy to poison the municipal water supply of two major U.S. cities (see Hoffman, 1995:275, 277; Marks, 1996:90-91);[2] the 1992 armed stand-off between the FBI and Randy Weaver, an Identity Christian, at Ruby Ridge in Idaho (see Aho, 1994: chapter 4; Dees, 1996: chap. 1); and, most dramatically, the Oklahoma City bombing on April 19, 1995 (see Hamm, 1997; Dees, 1996:

chap. 9). These events inspire and motivate dedicated American White supremacists to *act* to further their cause (also see Dees, 1996). Right-wing violence, in other words, is a problem that should not be taken lightly (for further examples of American White supremacist violence, see Marks, 1996: chap. XII; Smith, 1994: chap. 4-5).

Equally alarming is the number of people currently enrolled in extreme Right groups both in Europe and North America, as well as the size of the pool of individuals from the fringe Right who are susceptible to their messages (see Barrett, 1984; Schmidt, 1993:9-10). Berlet (1995) claims that:

> The armed militias [which, according to Berlet's definition, include the Ku Klux Klan, survivalists, militant gun-rights advocates, anti-tax protesters, far right libertarians, the Posse Comitatus, Christian Identity and the Christian Patriots, to name but a few] constitute the zealous offshoot of the larger and more diffuse Patriot movement, which has been fueled by a series of right-wing conspiracy theories. . . The Patriot movement involves about 5 million people, compared to the ten to forty thousand members of the armed militia movement. Nevertheless, the militias have been growing rapidly, linking up electronically through media such as computer networks, fax networks, and radio broadcasting. (p. 284)

Many groups are a part of international networks (Chairoff, 1977: chap. 16; Ebata, 1997a; Hill, 1988; Jensen, 1993).

According to Schmidt (1993:68), membership in the *Deutsche Alternative* (German Alternative – an extreme Right organization in Germany) increased from 9 to several hundreds in the space of one year, and that the ranks of similar German organizations swelled just as rapidly (also see Kagedan, 1997:114-116; Zimmermann and Saalfeld, 1993:60-62). He adds that: "[in] June 1991, 2,000 neo-Nazis [marched] through Dresden because one of their ranks was shot in a fight with a pimp. And these numbers don't include the Republicans and the DVU [*Deutsche Volksunion*, a Right-wing political party], whose memberships in 1992 exceeded 50,000" (Schmidt, 1993:68, parentheses omitted). Elsewhere, Schmidt (1993) asserts that:

> Shortly after Rostock [an incident which occurred in August of 1992 in which hundreds of violent extremists attacked and completely destroyed a refugee shelter], a poll [revealed] that 37 percent of Germans believe they "have to protect themselves against refugees and foreigners in their country." Fifty-one percent [were] sympathetic to the slogan "Germany for the Germans," and 26 percent [agreed] with "Foreigners out." (p. 156)

Young people appear to be particularly susceptible to the messages of the extreme Right. A poll funded by IBM in Germany in 1992 indicated that nearly 30,000 youths between the ages of 16 and 24 were willing

to commit violent acts against refugees and foreigners. The poll revealed that close to a third of the respondents were "thoroughly xenophobic or at least prone to xenophobic ideas," and that 13 percent were politically "close to a fascist successor organization" (Schmidt, 1993:156). Schmidt (1993) also states that:

> Seventeen percent of the 4,300 adolescents from the states of Saxony and Saxony-Anhalt who were questioned considered descriptions of the Holocaust to be greatly exaggerated." One fourth of all schoolchildren and 40 percent of apprentices [accepted] the idea that the Third Reich "also had its good sides." (p. 156)

Saxony and Saxony-Anhalt are, however, both states in East Germany, and one must therefore interpret the above statistics with this knowledge in mind (see Chapter 4). I will discuss circumstances that are specific either to the former West or the former East Germany in this thesis as the need arises. Nevertheless, the results of the IBM poll warrant concern on the part of observers.

In North America, many skinheads have become shock troops for the Ku Klux Klan, Tom Metzger's White Aryan Resistance (WAR), the National Socialist White American Party, the Aryan Nations, the Church of the Creator, and neo-Nazi movements (see Anti-Defamation League of B'Nai B'rith, 1988:60-61; Christensen, 1994; Hamm, 1993; Kaplan, 1993:72; J. Moore, 1993; Ridgeway, 1990:163-167; Suall and Lowe, 1988; Zellner, 1995:7-10).[3] Skinhead youths are an even more substantial component of European neo-Nazi movements (see Hockenos, 1993; Ostow, 1995; Ridgeway, 1990:163-64; Schmidt, 1993:58-59). One should note, however, that not all skinheads are racists (Anti-Defamation League of B'Nai B'rith, 1988:60; Suall and Lowe, 1988:139; Zellner, 1995:10-16). Likewise, although most extreme Right groups possess common goals such as the overthrow of ZOG and the establishment of a racially pure territory for White people, certain political, theological, strategic, and/or organizational differences have resulted in the creation of oppositional factions within the broader movement (see Kaplan, 1993; Dobratz and Shanks-Meile, 1995).

Kaplan (1993:31) asserts that a tendency exists among millenarian White supremacist groups to retreat as far as they can from a society they see as "inherently contaminating," and thus to avoid confrontations with their enemies. These groups, he argues, "have rarely resorted to revolutionary violence" (Kaplan, 1993:31). Pastor Dan Gayman's Identity Christian Church of Israel, according to Kaplan, is one example of a relatively well known White supremacist organization that has adopted a

retreatist/quietist posture. Yet Kaplan (1993:31) himself notes that "on occasion, and under circumstances which are still far from clear, these groups may emerge as activists or even as violent centers of revolutionary activism." Jonathan White's (1989:17) words of caution are therefore highly appropriate in this case: "modern right-wing extremism has not manifested itself in a widespread campaign of violence. Unfortunately, the past cannot be accepted as a valid indicator of the future." In other words, all extreme Right groups should be viewed as potentially serious threats to the State and the wider society.

Theory

Conventional Approaches To Racist Movements

What little theoretical sociological work exists on contemporary Right-wing extremism has been pursued beyond the realm of social movement theory. Stanley Barrett (1987:7-8) discusses three perspectives on racism and racist violence that implicitly apply to Right-wing groups. These are: the deviant-individual, social-forces, and institutional-structural perspectives. The functionalist oriented deviant-individual perspective is based on the premise that racially motivated violence is the work of poorly socialized individuals. These individuals commit violent deeds and may even join violent subcultures because of the alienation and anomie (sense of normlessness) they experience, which is a result of their being unable to achieve culturally sanctioned goals. Mark Hamm's (1993) study of American neo-Nazi skinheads represents research that has been carried out in the deviant-individual tradition. William Zellner's (1995) Mertonian analysis of skineads, the Ku Klux Klan, and American survivalists also falls into this category. The implications that follow from the deviant-individual perspective is that "it is not society itself that must be addressed to remedy the situation, but instead those scattered individuals who deviate form its norms" (Barrett, 1987:8).

The social-forces approach suggests that racist violence occurs as a result of unstable societal conditions, such as high unemployment and immigration (Barrett, 1987:8). It forms a "bridge" between micro and macro perspectives, while emphasizing the former in its analyses. Individuals commit racist violence and adopt racist attitudes due to the (perceived) impact of certain macro phenomena on their lives.

The competition-based and culture-based theories identified by Christopher Husbands (1993:120-122) fall under the rubric of social-forces perspectives. Competition-based theories are founded on the assumption that the competition in which indigenous residents must engage with "immigrants/foreigners/visible minorities" over limited economic and material resources gives way to racist sentiments. Economic resources refer to such things as employment and promotional opportunities, while material resources refer to such things as access to social housing, or perceptions about the impact that the presence of certain ethnic groups in the neighbourhood will have on rent or on the resale value of a house (to list but a few examples). Husbands (1993:121) asserts that "most competition-based theories are formulated in terms of individuals' actual or perceived experience; i.e. persons who see themselves involved in the competitive situation are those most likely to exhibit hostile reactions towards those with whom they are supposedly in competition." Culture-based theories pertain to hostility that is predicated on language differences, different culinary practices, different religious practices, different marital/sexual practices, and fears of cultural dilution (either at the street, neighbourhood, town/city, and/or national level, and even at the level of the 'White race' in some cases [Husbands, 1993:121]).

Thus, material, cultural, and socio-spatial factors, whether perceived or real, may influence the social psychological processes that lead one to adopt a racist disposition. More succintly, "the more strongly that social, occupational and political processes of disintegration develop in a society to which foreigners migrate, the greater the problems that these migrants will face in their integration" (Heitmeyer, 1993:20) or, conversely, the greater the degree of hostility that citizens of the host country will exhibit toward the new arrivals. Yet as Barret observes, "racism is seen [from the social-forces approach] as an aberration, generated by atypical circumstances, rather than as an integral feature of society" (1987:8).

The third approach Barret summarizes is the institutional-structural perspective. According to this perspective, "racism is a structural product of the institutional framework, a manifestation of the pattern of social relationships which meshes with and reinforces the overall system of stratification" (Barrett, 1987:8). The individual behaviours interpreted via the deviant-individual and social-forces approaches (i.e., interpersonal violence and hostility) are therefore but extreme expressions of values that are endemic in society. Barrett argues this point in more detail (1984; 1987: chap. 11) with reference to the Canadian

context, and Ferrarotti (1994) does so implicitly when he discusses racism and anti-Semitism in the European context. The institutional-structural perspective is thus a macro level perspective which subsumes the micro elements of the other two approaches.

Although I agree with the general thrust of the institutional-structural perspective, I contend that the conclusions of research on racist organizations or racist violence informed by this perspective are predetermined by it. More precisely, wherever these phenomena occur, regardless of social context, racist action represents an extreme expression of values that are endemic in society. How can we tell that discriminatory values are endemic in society? Because racist organizations and violence can only thrive in environments where they are, generally speaking, compatible with the dominant ideology. Even though the institutional-structural perspective is useful as a descriptive framework, it is a weak explanatory framework because it is tautological. Yet while the deviant-individual and social-forces perspectives each possess a more sound internal logic, they remain silent on how the individuals and groups they study become a part of larger and more complex *national (and sometimes international) movements*, rather than mere localized subcultures. I therefore argue that social movement theory is potentially the most powerful tool we have for understanding the emergence of Right-wing extremist movements in Europe and North America.

The Concept of "Social Movement"

Scholars have conducted research on social movements from a variety of intellectual traditions. Today, the dominant intellectual traditions in social movement research include: the new social movements (NSM) paradigm (most notably represented by Alain Touraine and Alberto Melucci); the resource mobilization (RM) paradigm (developed by Mayer Zald and John McCarthy); the political process approach (elaborated by Charles Tilly), which one often finds subsumed within the RM paradigm; and the symbolic interactionist perspective (represented by Ralph Turner and Lewis Killian). Accordingly, researchers working within different paradigms have proposed different definitions for the concept of "social movement." Due to the way they conceptualize their object of study, these definitions frequently seem to have little in common.

Turner and Killian (1972:246, but originally 1957) emphasize the noninstitutional aspect of social movements in their definition. They define a social movement as a "collectivity acting with some continuity to promote or resist a change in the society or group of which it is part. As a collectivity a movement is a group with *indefinite* and *shifting* membership and with leadership whose position is determined more by the *informal response* of the members than by formal procedures for legitimizing authority" (Turner and Killian, 1972:246, italics added). The indefinite and shifting composition of movements as well as the determination of their leadership via informal member responses distinguishes movements from formal organizations and political parties. Indeed, Turner (cited in Diani, 1992:4) has stated elsewhere that social movements "are not necessarily or typically coterminous with movement organizations, [even though these] carry out much of the movement work and frequently attempt to control and speak for movements." The emergent norm theory developed by Turner and Killian is grounded in the assumptions of symbolic interactionism. Hence, Turner and Killian are primarily interested in the meaning construction processes and interpersonal/intergroup dynamics that influence the emergence and evolution of movements (see Turner and Killian ,1972:252).

McCarthy and Zald define the term "social movement" in a manner that is consistent with the definition proposed by Turner and Killian, although the research program of the former differs markedly from that of the latter. According to McCarthy and Zald ([1977] 1987:20), a social movement is "a set of opinions and beliefs which represents preferences for changing some elements of the social structure and/or reward distribution of a society." Until recently (see McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald, 1996), and in contrast with Turner and Killian, McCarthy and Zald focused on the structural conditions that enable movements to emerge, and on the cooperation and/or competition that exists among *formal* organizations within movements (see Zald and McCarthy, 1979, 1987). The RM paradigm they developed took the existence of grievances for granted and neglected processes of meaning formation, concentrating solely on the "how" of movement emergence at the expense of the "why."

Tilly (cited in Diani, 1992:5, italics added) defines social movements as "sustained series of interactions between power holders and persons successfully claiming to speak on behalf of a constituency *lacking formal representation*, in the course of which those persons make publicly visible demands for

changes in the distribution or exercise of power, and back those demands with public demonstrations of support." Tilly's concern with the interaction between power holders and persons claiming to speak on behalf of a constituency lacking formal representation, and the demands of the latter for changes in the distribution or exercise of power, indicates that he views social movements as collective actors engaged in a conflict in the sphere of institutional politics. The institutional dimension of social movement activity is not specified explicitly in the definitions that either Zald and McCarthy or Turner and Killian provide, even though the former assume that social movements primarily seek to effect changes in the sphere of institutional politics (see Chapter 3). Scholars refer to Tilly's approach as the political process perspective. Proponents of the political process model see the "timing and fate of movements as largely dependent upon the opportunities afforded insurgents by the shifting institutional structure and ideological disposition of those in power" (McAdam, 1996:23). More specifically, Tilly stresses the overall dynamics which determine social unrest and its characteristics, rather than [the activities of] social movements as specific organised actors" in his work (Diani, 1992:5). One often finds the political process perspective subsumed within the RM paradigm because it stresses the "how" as opposed to the "why" of movement emergence. Indeed, some of Tilly's political process research has been published in readers on RM theory (e.g., Tilly, 1979).

Touraine and Melucci are both advocates of NSM theory. In contrast to RM theory and the political process approach, which stress the social, economic, and organizational factors that influence or prevent the eruption of conflicts and/or social movements, NSM theory analyzes its object of study in terms of large-scale structural and cultural changes. Touraine claims that there is only ever one core conflict in a given society, and that one can only define a social movement in relation to this "core societal conflict." According to Touraine (1981:77), "the social movement is the organised collective behaviour of a class actor struggling against his class adversary for the social control of historicity in a concrete community." He defines historicity as the "overall system of meaning which sets dominant rules in a given society" (Touraine, 1981:81). All other conflicts (e.g., over the allocation of resources,...) are subordinated to the struggle for control over historicity in Touraine's scheme, and these secondary conflicts earn the

designations of "sub-movements," "anti-movements," "neocommunitarian movements," and "national movements" (see Touraine, 1985).

Touraine (1981:81) adds that a social movement involves the "combination of a principle of identity, a principle of opposition and a principle of totality." The principle of identity refers to the perceptions actors have of themselves and their role in society. The principle of opposition refers to the conflictual relationship a class actor has with its opponent. The principle of totality refers to the stakes that are involved between the struggling factions (i.e., historicity). One should note that according to this conceptualization, there are only two social movements in a given society at any one time: that of the "dominant group," and that of the "dominated." Touraine (1969) states that in industrial society, the core conflict pitted labour against capital, while in post-industrial (or "programmed") society, the core conflict is between the technocratic elites and the dominated who process information for those elites. Touraine contends that new and distinctive social movements have emerged as a result of the transformation of social relationships that allegedly have followed the transition from industrial to post-industrial society.

Melucci (1989:29, italics in original) defines social movements as a "specific class of collective phenomena which contains three dimensions. . . . [It] is a form of collective action which involves *solidarity*. . . . [It is engaged] in *conflict*, and thus in opposition to an adversary who lays claims on the same goods or values. . . . [It] *breaks the limits of compatibility of a system*." Rather than viewing a social movement as a unified datum, as other theorists do, Melucci views it as a more fluid action system. Indeed, he asserts that movements are not associational forms so much as they are, in and of themselves, messages (Melucci, 1989:60). Melucci adopts a constructivist view of movement emergence. That is to say, he is concerned with the determinants of individual participation in collective action; with the way these individuals construct collective action and identity; and with the symbolic content of movement activity. Melucci's focus on meaning construction and individual interaction is similar to the one adopted by Turner and Killian. Like Touraine, he includes the components of solidarity (identity), adversary (opponent), and common goods or values (totality) in his definition of social movement, albeit without reference to a "core conflict." Nevertheless, in a way that is also reminiscent of Touraine, he emphasizes the salience of the transition from industrial to post-industrial society in the emergence of contemporary social movements, as

well as the alleged existence of a common struggle against a technocratic opponent over culture and identity (historicity?) in which these movements are engaged (see Melucci, 1994, 1995).

Melucci's focus on the fluid aspects of movements contrasts sharply with the emphasis McCarthy and Zald place on the economic and organizational features of movement activity. Furthermore, Melucci stresses that "social movements are not coterminous with 'visible' political conflicts. . . . Even when they are not engaged in campaigns and mobilisations, social movements may still be active in the sphere of cultural production. Some strongly culture-oriented movements may mobilise only occasionally in the political arena" (Diani, 1992:6-7). Melucci's concentration on the noninstitutional, cultural conflicts in which movements participate therefore suggest that significant differences exist between his conception of social movements and Tilly's, which makes explicit reference to institutional struggles.

Yet in spite of the conceptual and/or epistemological differences that divide the various schools of thought on social movements, Mario Diani (1992) contends that there is enough common ground between these approaches to derive a synthetic definition of "social movement" from them. A synthetic definition is useful because it facilitates the comparison of the results of studies conducted by different authors in different contexts. Diani (1992:2) asserts that, in their own way, each school views social movements as a "specific social dynamic" that consists of "a process whereby several different actors, be they individuals, informal groups and/or organisations, come to elaborate, through either joint action and/or communication, a shared definition of themselves as being part of the same side in a social conflict." In light of this observation, Diani (1992:13) has extrapolated the following definition of the term "social movement" from the various definitions I discussed above that is nevertheless consistent with their respective orientations: "a social movement is a network of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations, engaged in a political or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity."

Right-Wing Extremism and Social Movement Theory

Right-wing extremism by and large conforms to Diani's synthetic definition of "social movement." In America, the extreme Right is a broad movement that incorporates a number of groups (e.g., the various Ku Klux Klans, the Posse Comitatus, White Aryan Resistance, the Aryan Nations, the

Church of the Creator,...). One even finds what I would call "submovements" within the broader extreme Right movement, such as Identity Christianity, neo-Nazism, and citizen militias (see George and Wilcox, 1996; Marks, 1996). As the existence of inter-group correspondence illustrates (e.g., see Kaplan, 1998) and inter-group cooperation (whether in the form of moral support during sieges with the authorities, of providing shelter for fugitives, or of financial or material contributions to other groups), these groups are linked via a network of informal interactions (see Marks, 1996:112-115; Smith, 1994: chap. 4). These groups also are engaged in a cultural conflict. What they challenge is not so much "the uneven distribution of power and/or economic goods [i.e., sources of 'political tension'], but socially shared meanings . . ., that is the ways of defining and interpreting reality" (Diani, 1992:10). Some movement adherents, however, such as David Duke (the "former" neo-Nazi and Grand Dragon of the Louisiana Ku Klux Klan), nevertheless choose to follow political avenues in order to reach their goals (see Diamond, 1995:258; Freedman, 1992; Rose, 1992). Finally, all members of the American (White supremacist) extreme Right share a collective identity as "oppressed White people" who are engaged in a struggle to preserve the racial "purity" of their country (see Daniels, 1997; Ferber, 1995).

We can say the same of the German extreme Right. German neo-Nazi organizations like the *Deutsche Alternative* (German Alternative) are linked not only to other German neo-Nazi groups and political parties but also to groups in other countries (Jensen, 1993; Ebata, 1997a; Schmidt, 1993). Like their American counterparts, German Right-wing extremists share a collective identity due to their engagement in a struggle to preserve the racial and ethnic "purity" of their homeland. This objective is illustrated by the popular neo-Nazi slogan "Germany for the Germans." Although there is a distinctly cultural component to the slogan, and hence to the objectives of German neo-Nazis, there is apparently a greater political dimension to the "German conflict" than to the American one. That is to say, members of Germany's Right-wing extremist underground are more likely to participate in institutional politics than are American extremists. Michael Kühnen, the late leader of the ANS/NA *(Aktionsfront Nationaler Aktivisten/Nationale Aktivisten*, an extreme Right organization that the German Constitutional Court banned in 1983) and other neo-Nazi groups (Skrypietz, 1994:136), asserted that "all the methods of democracy must be used in order to eliminate it" (Kühnen, quoted in Schmidt, 1993:12; also see Husbands,

1991:93, 99-100). Michael Schmidt (1993:12) adds that Kühnen took "pains to infiltrate the Republicans and other right-wing parties in order to win over their memberships. His success [was] mixed, and it [was] fine with him that these parties, for tactical reasons, officially [distanced] themselves from him." Many American extremists are opposed to their country's political system because they see it as being manipulated by ZOG, and therefore refuse to participate in the democratic process. What is important to note here, however, is that both American and German Right-wing extremists conform to Diani's synthetic definition of the term "social movement."

In the American literature, only Valerie Jenness and Kendal Broad (1997) have linked hate crimes to social movements, but they have done so only by documenting the reactions of some of these (Left-wing) movements to hate crimes.[4] In German academic circles, a debate has been waged since 1994 over the applicability of the sociological term "social movement" and of social movement theory to Right-wing extremism.[5] Although I do not have access to the German language sources in which the debate is taking place (nor could I read them if I did), their English language abstracts are available in the *Sociofile* database and they provide valuable, however limited, insights into the nature of the debate. Thomas Ohlemacher (1994), apparently writing from a resource mobilization framework, contends that German Right-wing extremism lacks the conditions and mobilization structures (e.g., large organizations, public support, a unifying ideology, and a central mobilizing actor) that an "actual social movement" requires. Christoph Butterwegge (1994) agrees with Ohlemacher, but on different grounds. Butterwegge equates social movements with protest action, and rebellion with attempts to weaken or at least democratize the state. He therefore argues that xenophobic violence does not constitute protest action "because protest is based on moral principles or a political ideological program for a better social alternative" (quoted from the *Sociofile* abstract). Likewise, he claims that Right-wing extremism is not a form of rebellion because the former calls for a stronger (and less democratic) State.

In response to Ohlemacher's observations, I think that the features of conventional social movements he finds lacking in Right-wing extremist groups only explain the relative lack of "success" (measured in terms of public appeal and concrete socio-political changes) these groups have experienced. The absent features and lack of success do not invalidate the designation of Right-wing extremism as a

social movement. Some researchers suggest that many of the "absent features" of social movements are in fact present in Right-wing extremism, but on a smaller scale. I agree with that point of view. Werner Bergmann and Rainer Erb (1994a), for example, note:

> The Right milieu includes interconnected groups, technical and computer expertise, contacts with Western [and Eastern] European groups, symbolic resources (e.g., Nazirock cassettes), media know-how, construction of a history, an intellectual arm, recruiting, organized events, a circle of perceived enemies (e.g., foreigners, the Left) who form a stable conflict constellation, strong infrastructure, a subculture, and some specific goals (e.g., changing German asylum policy). (quoted from the *Sociofile* abstract)

Michael Schmidt (1993), Yaron Svoray (Svoray and Taylor, 1994), and Ingo Hasselbach (1996) have all documented these components of the German Right-wing extremist underground in their first hand accounts of the scene.

Although she is cautious about viewing Right-wing extremism as a social movement, Linda Steinmetz (1996) states that the extreme Right's extensive use of computer networks is fostering a collective identity that has a strong potential for mobilization. These computer networks create a relatively safe, self-supporting milieu that simultaneously enable internal communication and mobilization, cooperation and cooperative work with other groups (including American organizations and activists), the collection and dissemination of information, and access to the public domain. Chip Berlet (1995:284) makes similar observations about American extremists and their use of modern technologies. In agreement with Steinmetz, Wolfgang Kuhnel and Ingo Matuschek (1994) assert that Right-wing extremism is "not a mature social movement," but that one can discuss it "as a potential social movement in its initial stages" (quoted from the *Sociofile* abstract).

I disagree with Butterwegge's conception of social movements, social protest, and rebellion. His conceptions of those terms betray a Left-wing intellectual bias. I do not believe that one can support convincingly the claim that the term "rebellion" possesses an inherently absolutist definition that is grounded in libertarian principles. After all, rebellion could justifiably entail a desire to overthrow the State and to change the political system in order to establish a different system, and to monopolize the latter with a new regime that may or may not have noble aims. Indeed, one could argue that Right-wing militants in the U.S. and Germany are trying to overthrow the political systems that currently govern their respective

countries in order to establish and monopolize a new system that is based on their own ideals. As Bergmann and Erb (1994b) argue, perspectives that deny that Right-wing extremism constitutes a social movement "rely on an overly rational, narrow, and normative definition of social movements" (quoted from the *Sociofile* abstract). Thus, there is no reason to restrict the term "social movement" to Left-wing socio-political activism. Ruud Koopmans (1995a, 1995b), a prominent European social movement analyst, also recommends expanding the scope of social movement theory in order to include Right-wing extremism in social movement research.

The recent emergence in German academic circles of the debate pertaining to the conceptualization of Right-wing extremism as a new social movement, the debate's limited diffusion, and the lack of agreement that characterizes it, mean that there is room for further discussion about the issue. It is useful to add a comparative dimension to the discussion, which is what this thesis will do. Yet although one can legitimately define Right-wing extremism as a social movement according to Diani's definition of the term, generally the Left-wing criteria utilized in the dominant European and American social movement research paradigms to identify social movements have precluded it from their respective analyses. The "new social movements" (NSM) perspective is the dominant paradigm in European research, while the resource mobilization (RM) perspective is the dominant paradigm in the U.S. (Klandermans, 1991:17).

New Social Movement Theory

The "new" in the NSM perspective "stresses that the new movements [those that have emerged since the late 1960s] differ from old movements (generally characterized as the labor movement) in values, action forms, and constituency" (Klandermans, 1991:26). Ecological, feminist, student, civil rights, and ethnic or nationalist movements are among those studied most frequently by NSM theorists. The reader should note that analysts traditionally associate these movements with a Left-wing orientation on the ideological spectrum. The emergence of NSMs is allegedly related to the changes that have occurred in the past two decades in the structure and mode of production of Western societies (i.e., the shift from industrial to post-industrial societies). One can immediately see that contemporary Right-wing extremism

is not an "old" movement according to this distinction: the vast majority of contemporary extremist groups in America and Germany have emerged during the past two decades with the exception of the Viking Youth, the Ku Klux Klan, the Liberty Lobby, and the various incarnations of the American Nazi Party (see Anti-Defamation League of the B'Nai B'rith, 1988; Marks, 1996). Moreover, although labour issues and economic concerns may represent a part of their respective discourses, one cannot claim that the primary concerns of Right-wing extremist groups are directly related to the "class position" of their members in the industrial system. Thus, Right-wing extremism must represent a certain type of "new" movement. Hank Johnston, Enrique Laraña, and Joseph Gusfield (1994:30) articulate the problematic that provided the impetus for this thesis: "the specter of violent skinheads and neofascist youth movements in Europe raises the question if these too somehow fit into the NSM equation of identity quest, everyday embeddedness, and broad structural change."

The NSM perspective's dichotomization of "old" and "new" movements may be based on erroneous assumptions, which could hence jeopardize the validity of the entire paradigm. NSM theorists claim that older movements had exclusively economic interests while the new movements are concerned with matters that pertain to identity and culture (Johnston *et al.*, 1994:7). Yet Albert Salomon noted as early as 1946 that one could not define all social movements of the industrial age solely in terms of material interests, nor were all social movements necessarily groups involved in a class struggle. For example, Salomon ([1946] 1995) stated that:

> As a revolutionary force, Marx's work has fascinated millions of workers, not by its scientific truth, but by the religious hopes and spiritual security it grants. Throughout the Marxist socialist movement this religious element has prevailed in the writings of the great political leaders. (p. 39)

Likewise, and also before the emergence of the NSMs, the eminent sociologist Herbert Blumer postulated that one can trace the origins of social movements to "gradual changes in the *values* of people – changes that can be called *cultural drifts*. Such cultural drifts stand for a general shift in the *ideas* of people, particularly along the line of the *conceptions people have of themselves*, and of their rights and privileges" (Blumer, [1951] 1995:60-61, italics added). Thus, one can argue that the themes of culture and identity are not exclusive to the realm of NSMs, nor are these necessarily "new" themes among social movements in general.

Also, I mentioned in the beginning of this section that according to NSM theorists, the structural and cultural changes that have accompanied the shift from industrial to post-industrial society in the Western World have contributed to the emergence of NSMs. This is one of the fundamental propositions of NSM theory. In the following chapter, this thesis will argue that the structural changes that have affected Western societies have equally contributed to the rise of Right-wing extremist movements in the U.S. and Germany. Nevertheless, one can analyze the impact of structural change on Right-wing extremism (and possibly other movements as well) in terms of pre-existing "grievance models" (e.g., relative deprivation theory). That observation also threatens the validity of the NSM paradigm. The other main proposition of NSM theory is that all social movements are engaged in the same "core conflict" (see Melucci, 1994; Touraine, 1981, 1985). Although I do not wish to discuss that proposition in any detail here, suffice it to say that I believe it is erroneous, for Right-wing extremism as well as for NSMs in general. All of the above observations indicate that the NSM paradigm requires revisions. These revisions are necessary if we are to acquire a more accurate comprehension of NSMs, and if we are to account for Right-wing extremism as a new social movement. I will provide further criticisms of the NSM paradigm in Chapter 2, and I also will propose revisions that will allow scholars to combine its key components with the resource mobilization paradigm and the relative deprivation approach to social movements.

Resource Mobilization Theory

Since the 1970s, the dominant paradigm in American research on social movements has been the resource mobilization (RM) perspective. Until recently, RM theorists have taken the existence of grievances in society as a given, and have therefore focused on the structural factors that contribute to the emergence and "success" of social movements rather than on the sources of their grievances (Mayer, [1991] 1995:173; cf. Zald and McCarthy, 1979, 1987). RM theorists argue that the availability of money and labour determine the extent to which social movement formation will occur.

Bert Klandermans (1991:24-26) asserts that the core of RM theory consists of the three following elements: analyzing the costs and benefits of participation in a social movement, the existence of organizations within the broader movements, and expectations of success. Analyzing the costs and benefits

of participation in a social movement indicates that RM theorists assume that individuals are rational actors. According to the cost/benefit hypothesis, personal evaluation of the risks and rewards that are associated with collective action is a more accurate predictor of individual participation in a social movement than are the goals and grievances of that particular movement.

Secondly, RM theorists view formal organizations within movements as important resources for social movements. Klandermans (1991:25-26) states that "organization decreases the costs of participation (Morris 1984); it is important in the recruitment of participants (Oberschall 1973, 1980); and, in the opinion of most students, it increases the chance of success (Gamson 1975; but see Piven and Cloward 1979 for a different view)." The development and impact of formal organizations within social movements is so central an object of study within RM analyses that social movement *organizations* have effectively become synonymous with the broader concept of "social movements," which thereby leads to the exclusion of less organized (and hence usually less influential) movements from RM inquiry (Mayer, 1991:56, [1991] 1995:175; Piven and Cloward, 1992:317).

Finally, individual perceptions of long-term movement viability and success also influences the extent to which a social movement will attract participants. Klandermans (1991:26) states that "a favorable political opportunity structure, the presence of third parties and allies, and the discovery of . . . new tactics considerably increases the [perceived] chances that a social movement will succeed." As Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward (1992:316-17) observe, RM theorists emphasize the similarities between the structures of social movements and the wider society, and between conventional and protest behaviour.

It is interesting to note, however, that although there is no reason why the tools of RM theory cannot be applied to Right-wing extremism, "not many researchers deal with fundamentalism and the new right as a social movement. Left-liberal scholars [and many American social movement researchers fit into this classification] *refuse* to grant such phenomena the status of social movements" (Mayer, 1991:80, italics added). This study therefore will argue that if researchers discard their political biases, then principles of RM theory will be applicable to Right-wing extremism as well as to Left-wing social movements. One can criticize RM theory on many other grounds (e.g., see Kitschelt, 1991; Mayer, [1991] 1995; Piven and Cloward, 1992), but I will reserve a discussion of these criticisms until the third chapter of this thesis.

Toward A Synthetic Social Movement Research Paradigm?

Margit Mayer ([1991] 1995:170, 190) contends that the RM approach is context specific and that one cannot apply it to European social movements. She argues (Mayer, [1991] 1995:186-87) that the American political culture is much more tolerant, and indeed even encourages challenge, dissidence, and innovation, which stands in sharp contrast with the European context where the state is "institutionally biased against insurgency" (Mayer, [1991] 1995:190). Among other things, she also points out that in comparison with European social movements, American movements are more entrepreneurial and competitive while simultaneously less ideological. Mayer ([1991] 1995:188) asserts that this unique characteristic of American movements is consistent with the equally unique entrepreneurial spirit one finds in the U.S. Thus, American/RM researchers traditionally have focused on the conditions that facilitate movement emergence rather than on the reasons that inspire movement emergence in the first place. That focus has predominated because the existence of competing ideologies in the American context allegedly is a given that needs no explanation. Whether one can positively claim that the American Right-wing extremist movement is less "ideological" than similar European movements is open to debate.

Mayer remarks that the assumptions of RM theory are compatible with the unique characteristics of the American "social movement industry," and that those assumptions are not applicable to the European context. Rather, she argues that due to their "more ideological nature" and more repressive social contexts, European movements require a specifically tailored analytical approach that can account for the reasons for their emergence and which does not view movements as "big business" (i.e., profit oriented organizations), as some RM theorists do (cf. McCarthy and Zald, 1987). Conversely, Klandermans (1991:29), citing Alberto Melucci, remarks that NSM theory explains the "why" of social movements while RM theory accounts for the "how." He also writes that European researchers have recently and successfully incorporated RM concepts in their analyses of NSMs (Klandermans, 1991:18).

I agree with the position that one can combine aspects of NSM theory with RM theory (including the political process approach). The former addresses the emergence of grievances and the symbolic aspects of social movements, while the latter deals with the structural dimensions that facilitate or impede

movement development. Although all the built-in assumptions of the two approaches are not necessarily applicable beyond the contexts from which they originated, their central questions certainly are. For example, even though the question of how alternative ideologies arise in locales where the "state is institutionally biased against insurgency" may warrant research priority over other questions in the European context, one cannot deny that European social movements must also rely on certain strategies and resources in order to mobilize participants, and that formal organizations exist within broader movements. The German neo-Nazi organization ANS/NA, which I mentioned earlier in this chapter, is a case in point. Likewise, movement adherents in America do not join movements simply because of the availability of resources or expectations of success. The vast majority of adherents must at least believe in some of their movement's goals before they will consider participating in it.

Moreover, this study will demonstrate that relative deprivation, a concept that scholars associate with the by and large discredited classical approach to social movement research, also has a vital role to play in a synthetic paradigm. It will demonstrate the same of culture. The concept of culture acts as a potential "bridge" between the three social movement research traditions. Ann Swidler's (1986) performative approach provides a sophisticated interpretation of the role that culture plays in the emergence of social movements. I will reserve a discussion and evaluation of relative deprivation theory and the concept of culture for Chapter 4, and will further address their relevance for a synthetic paradigm in Chapter 5.

The attempt to synthesize elements of classical and contemporary perspectives on social movements is not totally novel. Joseph Gusfield (1994) has already revisited and revised mass society theory (another classical approach to social movements), a perspective that was originally articulated by the likes of Karl Mannheim, Hannah Arendt, and William Kornhauser between 1940 and 1959, in order to highlight the relevance of some of its concepts to contemporary social movement theory. Taking my cue from Gusfield and his efforts to reassert the utility of mass society theory concepts, I will attempt to salvage and revise elements of Ted Gurr's (1970) relative deprivation theory in order to reintroduce them to and combine them with contemporary social movement theory.[6] I expect that my synthetic model will

apply especially well to Right-wing social movements. Finally, I must stress that this thesis consists primarily of a *theoretical* essay that will depend on future empirical research for its validation.

Objectives of the Study: A Summary

This study will address three questions:

1) Can one analyze Right-wing extremism by relying on conepts and propositions that researcherd have articulated in the social movement literature?

2) Can social movement paradigms transcend the boundaries of the original socio-historical contexts for which scholars initially developed them?

3) Can one create a synthetic social movement research paradigm that incorporates the core elements of the three main competing social movement research traditions (the NSM paradigm, the RM paradigm, and the relative deprivation approach)?

Earlier in this chapter I indicated that the answer to the first question is affirmative. I also hypothesize that the answer to the other two questions is affirmative as well. That is to say, social movements (including Right-wing extremism) on both sides of the Atlantic are affected by the transition from industrial to post-industrial society, by the availability of resources and political opportunities, and by widespread grievances. The various paradigms are complementary, rather than mutually invalidating. I should stress, however, that although the NSM paradigm has infused social movement research with much needed attention to symbolic and noninstitutional concerns, I suspect that one can analyze its most important (and acceptable) propositions from a broader relative deprivation framework. Thus, although some of the concerns of NSM theory have a place in a synthetic paradigm, I contend that the usefulness of the NSM paradigm in and of itself is dubious.

Due to constraints in terms of time and space, this thesis will focus primarily on the macro (societal) dimensions of a synthetic social movement paradigm and on the macro features that contribute to militant Right-wing activism. Nevertheless, at times I will discuss the micro and meso aspects of the three research traditions, if only to demonstrate their overall theoretical comaptibility.

A Typology of Right-Wing Extremists

I include here a brief typology of Right-wing extremist groups to assist the reader in comprehending the distinctions that exist between groups within the broader movement. This typology is by no means exhaustive, nor are the categories always mutually exclusive. Indeed, one often finds overlap between groups, especially in the American context (Kaplan, 1997:xvi). Here I will only define the groups that I am most likely to mention throughout this thesis. For more details on the groups I will list below or on other Right-wing extremist organizations, the reader should consult Anti-Defamation League of B'Nai B'Rith (1988), George and Wilcox (1996), Kaplan (1995b; forthcoming), and Marks (1996).[7]

Marks (1996:56) defines neo-Nazi groups as "those who use traditional Nazi symbolism, self-identify with Nazi ideas, or show respect or reverence for Adolf Hitler and the Third Reich." The Christian Identity movement is a "pseudo-theological racist movement, unaffiliated with any denomination, with [White] supremacists teaching that Jews are the devil's children and blacks are 'mud people'" (Marks, 1996:76). Militias are "loosely organized paramilitary groups of mostly white men.... [whose members] feel wronged by the government, and haunted by the economy, mistrusting anyone in power much more than the normal citizen and voter" (Marks, 1996:100-01). Citizen militias are spread across the U.S., and most lack central organization. Ku Klux Klan organizations "are highly fragmented, but remain modeled loosely on the Civil War era precedents" (Kaplan, 1993:33). The Ku Klux Klans are the infamous white hoods that strove for the establishment of a "pure white" America. Skinheads are members of an initially apolitical London working class youth subculture (see Bessant, 1995; Brake, 1974; Campbell *et al.*, 1982; Hamm, 1993: chapter 2; Kinsella, 1994:255; J. Moore, 1993: chapter 2; Tanner, 1978; Walker, 1980; Zellner, 1995:2-7) that has since spread throughout the Western world. In the past decade, the skinhead subculture has acquired notoriety for the numerous acts of racist violence for which many of its members have been responsible.

Chapter 2: A Critical Evaluation of the New Social Movement Paradigm

As I have already mentioned in the introductory chapter of this thesis, the NSM perspective stresses that the new social movements are qualitatively different from the "old" movements (i.e., labour movements). One can reduce the theoretical foundations of the NSM paradigm to two core propositions: 1) NSMs have emerged due to the structural changes that have accompanied the transition from an industrial to post-industrial society in the Western world; and 2) all NSMs are involved in the same central conflict with the same adversary. Yet before I discuss and evaluate these propositions, I will highlight and criticize the primary qualitative distinctions that one can allegedly draw between the old and the new social movements, and I will discuss the applicability of these distinctions for contemporary Right-wing extremism. A critique of NSM theory also is necessary for reasons that will become apparent in Chapters 5 and 6.

New Social Movements: Eight Identifying Characteristics

Based on their review of the literature, Hank Johnston, Enrique Laraña, and Joseph Gusfield (1994) have identified eight characteristics that define NSMs. These characteristics are: 1) membership based on demographic and social categories other than class; 2) ideological pluralism; 3) a primary concern with symbolic as opposed to material issues; 4) reliance on individual action rather than mass mobilization to further movement aims; 5) a deeper emotional involvement from and impact on movement participants; 6) the adoption of nonviolent forms of protest; 7) discontent with institutional politics and action beyond the realm of institutional politics; and 8) a diffused and decentralized organizational structure.

The Demographic and Social Bases of Movement Participation

Most NSM theorists contend that social class no longer constitutes the basis upon which movements form.[1] Rather, their objectives resonate among more specific segments of society (i.e., on the bases of age, gender, sexual orientation, and/or occupation, irrespective of socioeconomic status [Johnston *et al.*, 1994:6]). This appears to be the case among Right-wing extremists as well. Although estimates

suggest that the female proportion of membership in German Right-wing extremist groups has increased from 1% to 5% since unification (Mushaben, 1996:250), and the proportion of female convictions for "Right-wing" related violent offences in 1994 stood at 4.5% (total N = 2584 [Mushaben, 1996:242]), Right-wing extremism is by and large a male phenomenon. In the U.S., females represent 7% (total N = 75) of those indicted for Right-wing terrorist activities between 1980 and 1989 (Smith, 1994:49).[2]

The low rates of female participation in non-institutional Right-wing organizations come as no surprise. First, the emergence of the contemporary "White supremacist" variety of Right-wing extremism in both Germany and the U.S. represents a backlash against the gains feminism has made over the past two decades (Daniels, 1997:117-121; Ferber, 1995:2; Mushaben, 1996:243). Joyce Marie Mushaben (1996) states:

> In a world of shrinking employment opportunities, women as well as foreigners are blamed for men's inability to assume their traditional roles as chief breadwinners and heads of household. Women's participation in paid labor is also held accountable for the breakdown of the family, one function of which is to offer men a haven of support and security *vis-à-vis* the harsh world of competitive capitalism. (p. 243, italics in original)

Second, the discourse of the extreme Right by and large restricts women to the functions of propagators of the White race, of objects of sexual desire, and of pure beings who require the protection of White males. Also, the extreme Right discourse limits the responsibilities of White women to domestic duties and child rearing (Daniels, 1997:56-64; also see Bjørgo, 1995b:11; Douglas, 1992:130).

The few women who are involved in the German Right-wing extremist movement have done so primarily as a response to crime and/or unemployment problems they perceive are related to the influx of immigrants or foreigners their country has experienced since unification (Mushaben, 1996:249-50, 253). Also, all five types of femi-Nazis (far Right female sympathizers, "fascho brides," activists, militant streetfighters [also known as Reenies], and party women of the Old and New Right), as Mushaben refers to them, view National Socialism as the only viable alternative to both a Socialist government and a market economy (Mushaben, 1996:254). Smith (1994:49) states that almost all of the women that were indicted for Right-wing terrorism in the U.S. during the eighties "were married to active members of violent elements of the extreme right." The militaristic predisposition and hypermasculinity of the extreme Right,

and especially of the skinhead subcultures contained therein, probably do a great deal to impede female participation in these groups.

A much clearer picture of the age structure of those charged with Right-wing crimes emerges from *Verfassungsschutz* (the German Federal Agency for the Protection of the Constitution) data than from American data. According to Ingrid Skrypietz's (1994:135) analysis of 1991 V*erfassungsschutz* arrest statistics, over 95% of people charged and arrested for committing crimes with a Right-wing background were under 30 years of age.[3] 70% were between 16 and 20 years old. Thus, Right-wing *activism* in Germany is primarily a youth phenomenon (also see Watts, 1997; Willems, 1995:168). Skrypietz (1994:133, italics in original) states that in Germany, the "membership of right-wing organizations has doubled from some 20,000 in 1982 to 39,800 in 1991 (multiple membership [and Republikaner party membership] not included). . . . On the far right of the spectrum, the *Verfassungsschutz* estimates that some 6,300 persons belong to neo-Nazi associations, 4,400 of them are considered as militant, 4,200 are described as skinheads with clear ideological links with the neo-Nazi scene; this applies especially to the East German skinheads." Yet Helmut Willems (1995:173), in contrast with Skrypietz, estimates that only 15% of violent crimes perpetrated against foreigners in Germany are the work of dedicated activists.

Based on his analysis of police records, Willems (1995:164) attributes the plurality of violent offences against foreigners to ethnocentristic and criminal youths as well as "fellow travellers" (youths who join subcultures due to fashion trends and/or peer pressure). He claims that the latter are ideologically unaffiliated in most cases, while the former two tend to express sympathy for Right-wing ideologies and make use their slogans without possessing any explicit ties to organized movements (Willems, 1995:169-73; also see Kagedan, 1997:127; Watts, 1997). In spite of the comments that observers frequently make that xenophobic violence is "usually preceded by *spontaneous* decisions under a strong influence of alcohol" (Willems, 1995:168, italics in original), one must stress that one cannot explain the selection of targets and the routinization of violence carried out against these targets by certain individuals in terms of youth rowdiness and excessive alcoholic consumption (Bjørgo and Witte, 1993:10). Low estimates of hard core extremist participation in violent crime do not nullify the suggestion that German Right-wing

extremist activism is primarily a youth phenomenon. The "inside look" Michael Schmidt (1993) and Ingo Hasselbach (1996:238-39) provide into Germany's neo-Nazi underground corroborate this suggestion.

In America, the average age at indictment of Right-wing terrorists is 39 (Smith, 1994:47). 36% of those indicted were over the age of 40 (also see Weinberg, 1993a:190). This demographic profile of American extremists stands in marked contrast to that of German extremists. One can partially explain this difference in terms of the proportionately smaller number of racist skinheads that operate in the American locale when compared to the German situation. Citing Anti-Defamation League statistics, Leonard Weinberg (1997:238) states that approximately 3000 racist skinheads were active in America in 1993. Recall (from the typology I presented in the introductory chapter of this thesis) that the skinhead movement is the primary youth division of the broader White supremacist movement. The age structure suggests that different cultural and/or structural dynamics have influenced the emergence of White supremacist movements in Germany and the U.S. Later in this and the following chapters, I will discuss the factors that have had an impact on the average age of American and German Right-wing extremists.

In terms of occupational status, Willems (1995:168, italics in original) asserts that in the German context, "the propensity to xenophobic violence and violence itself seems to correlate more strongly with *lower levels of education* (grades 9/10) and with *apprentices* and *skilled manual workers*. Indications of . . . special social problems (like high unemployment, lack of school certificates), and a predominantly lower class origin could be found for subsections of the suspects." Willems (1995:171) points out, however, that politically motivated extremists are more likely to "have successful degrees (often even a higher-educational level), successful job training, as well as a steady job," when compared to members of non-ideologically affiliated ethnocentristic and criminal youth subcultures with Right-wing tendencies.

Smith (1994:51) contends that with the exception of a handful of highly educated and professionally trained leaders, the majority of American Right-wing extremists "lack even minimal job and educational skills." William Pierce (head of the National Alliance, a neo-Nazi group) holds a doctorate in physics, and Richard Butler (head of the Aryan Nations) is an engineer, as is Wilhelm Schmitt of the Posse Comitatus. Nevertheless, "many of the members of [American Right-wing extremist] groups were drawn to these organizations by the lure of a place to stay and a modest monthly salary in exchange for work at the

compounds" (Smith, 1994:51). Members of the Covenant, Sword, and Arm of the Lord (CSA) allegedly lived in abject poverty. American Right-wing extremist groups are particularly active in the farm belt, and have sought (sometimes successfully) to enlist farmers who are experiencing financial difficulties into their organizations (Coates, 1987; Corcoran, 1990; Young, 1990).

Although sexual orientation is usually only a salient dimension of gay and lesbian social movements, it also represents a focal point for Right-wing extremists both in Germany and the U.S. The White supremacist discourse is, generally speaking, virulently homophobic (Daniels, 1997:130-32; Ferber, 1995:16; Hasselbach, 1996:134-35; cf. Schmidt, 1993:64-65).[4] Ironically, Michael Kühnen (one of the most important figures in the German neo-Nazi underground who died of AIDS in 1991) was a homosexual (Schmidt, 1993:90), and the National Socialist League is an American homosexual neo-Nazi organization (ADL, 1988:46). These presumably are exceptions to the rule.

Ideological Pluralism

The second hallmark of NSMs Johnston *et al.* (1994:6-7) identify is the particularistic ideological frameworks they embrace. Whereas Marxist conceptions of ideology provided the framework from which the working-class movements operated, the new movements "exhibit a pluralism of ideas and values" (Johnston *et al.*, 1994:6-7). The proliferation of special interest or single issue movements, such as the environmental and animal rights movements, reflect the lack of an overarching and totalizing ideological framework to the "left" of the ideological spectrum, where Marxism once held sway. If we accept my thesis that the Right also has its "new social movements," then the decline (and in many contexts, obsolescence) of Marxism as a framework for social change cannot be contested. The existence of Right-wing groups with very diverse and even antithetical objectives precludes the existence of an overarching and totalizing paradigm for the Right as well. In addition to White supremacists, one finds the Jewish Defense League, the Nation of Islam, and various Christian fundamentalist movements associated with the extreme "Right" in America (see Laird and Wilcox, 1996).

Also, and as I have alluded to in the introductory chapter of this thesis, the contemporary inability to draw concrete boundaries between elements of "Rightist" and "Leftist" thought effectively prevent the

development of grand ideological frameworks (Eatwell, 1990a, 1990b; Krejčí, 1991). Finally, although they do share a common philosophy, White supremacists are divided along the Christian vs. National Socialist and the retreatist vs. revolutionary axes, to name but a few of the cleavages that inhibit the formation of a White supremacist ideological framework.[5] These observations indicate that NSMs are not constrained by "traditional" models of action (i.e., bourgeois or proletarian, according to the Marxist tradition) but, quite to the contrary, are pragmatic in their orientations to action and decision making. That pragmatism is true for both Left- and Right-wing NSMs.

Symbolic Vs. Material Concerns

For the third identifying characteristic of NSMs, Johnston *et al.* (1994) state:

> The grievances and mobilizing factors tend to focus on cultural and symbolic issues that are linked with issues of identity rather than on economic grievances that characterized the working-class movement. . . . They are associated with a set of beliefs, symbols, values, and meanings related to sentiments or belonging to a differentiated social group; with the members' image of themselves, and with new, socially constructed attributions about the meaning of everyday life. This is especially relevant to the ethnic, separatist, and nationalistic movements within existing states. (p. 7)

As I indicated in the introductory chapter of this thesis, working-class movements were not devoid of symbolic or cultural concerns. I cited the spiritual dimension of Marxism as one example of the symbolic concerns that one could find within the older types of social movements. When discussing the social movements of the industrial era, Albert Salomon ([1946] 1995) further argued:

> The religious beliefs and spiritual creeds of the industrial world have been the dynamic power in modern social movements and a vital reality in the constituents of the totalitarian world. We can formulate our theses in two sentences. The nineteenth and twentieth centuries are deeply religious epochs. The social and economic issues of modern movements cannot be separated from the religious meaning that have men have attributed to their revolutionary action. (pp. 28-29)

For example, Salomon ([1946] 1995:34) contended that most French socialists have incorporated elements of Saint-Simon's theology in their respective philosophies. Saint-Simon visualized a utopian society in which scientific knowledge would eliminate and replace religious beliefs that are predicated on the notion

of a Divine Being or the substance of a Holy. Saint-Simonians thought that one's salvation could be assured via the development of a perfect industrial and technological society:

> According to their belief, religion is the synthesis of knowledge for the practical purpose of guiding and directing the minds and souls of men in all situations. It is the spiritual power without which no temporal power can establish discipline, hierarchy, order, and obedience. This spiritual power does not derive its religious dignity from a transcendental God: it derives its message from the identity of scientific and humanitarian thinking in man. Positive science hypothesizes a providential plan for the universe. Hence scientists are the main body of the new clergy. They are supported by poets and artists. The scientists are able to derive final truth from the laws of nature, which enable men to know the code of interests and the sequence of needs. Poets will teach men the potentialities of their imagination, sentiments, and sensibility. Both will direct men to a wise and social use of their intellectual and emotional faculties by establishing order and making progress in the control of nature and society. The spiritual power, composed of scientists and artists, will take the initiative in planning the industrial world meaningfully in support of the temporal power of the industrialists. Thus, religion appears again as the all-embracing and leading institute in the social world, as the trustee of the final and absolute meaning of the whole. (Salomon, [1946] 1995:34)

Although the Saint-Simonian gospel, in contrast with Marxism, failed to effect significant changes in industrial societies, it did nonetheless constitute a social movement that attracted a number of dedicated adherents. Moreover, "its vision has tremendously influenced technological and socialistic progress, and it has inspired engineers and bankers as much as radical workers" (Salomon, [1946] 1995:37). Thus, we once again find that movements of the industrial era were not exclusively concerned with material issues, even though these may often have been a dominant aspect of their respective discourses.

The existence of cultural and spiritual concerns in the emergence of movements of the industrial era, which NSM theorists allege are distinctive features of NSMs, casts doubt on whether one can truly differentiate movement "eras" on the basis of particular classes of objectives (i.e., material vs. cultural/symbolic). Likewise, the dichotomization of "old" and "new" movements overlooks the fact that social movements have existed prior to the industrial era. Furthermore, these historical movements often have primarily oriented their actions toward the cultural sphere. Christianity and Islam are prime examples of culture-oriented pre-industrial social movements (Frank and Fuentes, 1987:1503). One may perhaps assert that concerns with identity now represent a far greater proportion of the content of NSM discourses when compared to that of industrial era working-class movements, but whether that is reason enough to draw a sharp line between the two is open to debate.

Nevertheless, to the extent that academics make a distinction between the orientations of movements, this study suggests that Right-wing extremist groups are primarily motivated by cultural, rather than material concerns. This is especially evident in the American context. Consider the following excerpts from a United Klans of America flyer, which list some of the elements contained in the organization's creed:

> We believe in God and the tenets of the Christian religion, and that a Godless nation cannot prosper long.
> The Christian religion is founded on the teachings of Jesus Christ. An infidel or a person who rejects Jesus Christ and his teachings, cannot be a true Klansman. And the nation that rejects God and His word is sure to reap calamity of some kind.
>
> [. . .]
>
> We believe in the eternal separation of the church and state:
> Roman Catholicism teaches the union of church and state with the church controlling the state.
>
> [. . .]
>
> We hold no allegiance to any foreign government, emperor, king, people or any other foreign political or religious power.
> Every Roman Catholic holds allegiance to the Pope of Rome, and Catholicism teaches that this allegiance is superior to his allegiance to his country.
>
> [. . .]
>
> We hold allegiance to the Stars and Stripes next to our allegiance to the Almighty God: God should be honored and obeyed above all: but next to God we should hold allegiance to the Stars and Stripes, which is the emblem of our liberties.
>
> [. . .]
>
> We believe in white supremacy:
> The Klan believes that America is a white man's country, and should be governed by whitemen [sic]. Yet the Klan is not anti-Negro, it is the Negro's friend. The Klan is eternally opposed to the mixing of the white and the colored races. Our creed: let the white man remain white, the black man black, the yellow man yellow, the brown man brown, and the red man red. God drew the color line, and man should let it remain, read Acts 17:26 if you please.
>
> [. . .]
>
> We believe in a closer relationship of capital and labor:
> And that the leadership of the American labor movement be white American born with a knowledge of American customs and principles.
> Instead of being antagonists one toward the other, capital and labor should work in harmony, this would be the case if men observed the teachings of Christ in His word, and if they would observe the teachings embodied in the Klan motto: Non Silba Sed Anthar - (not for the self but for others).
> We believe in the limitation of foreign immigration:

No nation can absorb an unlimited number of foreigners and retain its national integrity and traditions. Immigration should be controlled by the nation which the immigrants are entering. The nation should be judge as to whom it will receive.

The traditions of America have well-nigh been buried under the avalanche of foreign ideas and ideals.

But for the rising of the Knights of the KKK, they would now have been but a memory in some parts of our country.

[. . .]

The Klan believes in England for Englishmen, France for Frenchmen, Italy for Italians, and America for Americans: Is there anything objectionable to this? The Klan is not anti-Catholic, anti-Jew, anti-Negro, anti-foreign, the Klan is pro-Protestant, and pro-American.
(reprinted in Sargent, 1995:139-143)

With the exception of the passage on the relationship between capital and labour, all of the other excerpts deal with the identity and beliefs of the United Klans of America. Furthermore, the Klan's economic concerns are intrinsically tied to matters of identity. If the leadership of the American labour movement were exclusively "white American born" as well as "knowledgeable in American customs and principles," and if it adhered to the teachings of Christ, then capital and labour could work in harmony and most other economic concerns presumably would be solved. Although the complete flyer highlights the Klan's policy concerns (e.g., education, law enforcement, freedom of speech,...), the identity concerns I listed above take up most of the text. In spite of claiming that it is not "anti-Catholic, anti-Jew, anti-Negro, anti-foreign," the rhetoric of the United Klans of America is concerned with the promotion of an exclusivistic identity (i.e., White American Protestant) that is defined by its distinction and desire for separation from those who do not conform to the criteria by which one determines a true Klansmen, and hence a "true American." The objective of the organization is to transform America into a country that has been shaped according to the vision of the Klan.

The platform of the United Klans of America is not entirely representative of American Right-wing extremist groups in general, nor of other Klan groups in particular. For example, Thomas Robb, current Grand Dragon of the Arkansas chapter of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan and an Identity Christian, has stated in an interview with William Zellner (1995:34) that "the Klan, although established on religious beliefs, is more secular than religious in nature. A lot of people of many different religions are part of the Klan. I can discuss what I believe in a personal way, but I can't speak for the Klan. My purpose as national director is not to convert Klansmen to my religious beliefs." Likewise, even though Richard

Butler's Aryan Nations and the affiliated Church of Jesus Christ Christian discuss their economic policies in their publications (e.g., see Sargent, 1995:151, 157-58), the overriding concern in these publications is with issues of racial and national identity. The Aryan Nations defines itself as a "theopolitical movement," and as a "geopolitical movement for the re-establishment of White Aryan sovereignty over the lands of Aryan settlement and occupation" (quoted in Sargent, 1995:158). Their ideas are grounded in "racial nationalism" and "Christianity" (quoted in Sargent, 1995:158-59). The fact that a large proportion of American White supremacist organizations, the Aryan Nations foremost among them, follow Identity Christian beliefs (see Marks, 1996: chap. IX) speaks volumes as to the prominence of symbolic concerns among American Right-wing extremist groups. Indeed, one of the primary goals of Identity Christianity is to "biblicize" American law. Michael Barkun (1994), who has published what is perhaps the most authoritative source on Christian Identity, writes:

> When Christian Identity speaks of the Bible as an ultimate source of law, it looks to a future in which man-made law will not exist, having been displaced by the superior divine version. . . . Influential Identity writers regard the Bible as a sourcebook for rewriting positive law, which, particularly in the economic realm, must reflect biblical legislation in order to produce a righteous society. (p. 201)

Of course, Identity Christians interpret biblical law as being directed specifically to the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic peoples (Barkun, 1994:202).

Among the more prominent American White supremacist organizations, Tom Metzger's White Aryan Resistance (WAR) has articulated a platform that is, arguably, more economically driven than those of other groups (see Sargent, 1995:188-90). This economic concern may partially reflect the organization's non-Christian orientation. Researchers often classify WAR as a neo-Nazi organization, albeit a "nontraditional" one (see George and Wilcox, 1996:340-49; Marks, 1996:64-65). Nonetheless, WAR's proposed economic policies (as stated in the "Whitemen's Platform") are intended to strengthen the Aryan race as a whole (see Sargent, 1995:189). Thomas Robb may have best explained the philosophy that American Right-wing extremist groups have in common: "Economics is a very important issue, but I believe that there is something even more important than economics – and that is race. Race determines the society, the religious faith of the nation, and ultimately the economics of the nation" (quoted in Zellner, 1995:33).

Among American extremists, only the identity and goals of militias are not unequivocally based on racial nationalism (George and Wilcox, 1996:249-50; Scheinberg, 1997:62). Rather, these groups attempt to maintain their lifestyles (their ownership of guns in particular) free from governmental intrusion and regulation (Marks, 1996:101; cf. Stern, 1996). Richard Abanes (1996:22) and Kathy Marks (1996:102) suggest that a segment of the American militia movement has ties to Christian Identity, neo-Nazi, and other White supremacist groups (cf. George and Wilcox, 1996: chap. 18). These ties should not be surprising, considering the inclination of militias to espouse conspiracy theories, some of which are similar (if not identical) and at the very least compatible with White supremacist conspiracy theories (see George and Wilcox, 1996:266-69). Nevertheless, whether their constituents are explicitly racist or otherwise, the *raison d'être* of militias is grounded in a conflict over symbolic (i.e., individual rights and lifestyle), as opposed to economic issues.

Considerably less information is available on the specific beliefs of German neo-Nazi organizations. There is, however, reason to suspect the conflict that German Right-wing extremists are engaged in is primarily occurring in the symbolic/cultural sphere rather than the economic sphere. Many researchers suggest that the surge of Right-wing extremist activity that has plagued Germany in the 1990s is intrinsically tied to the country's economic circumstances. Although I generally agree with this proposition (which I will address in greater detail later in this chapter as well as in Chapter 4), I nonetheless contend that primarily German neo-Nazis are articulating symbolic and cultural concerns in their discourse, they are attempting to realize a specific vision of German society and national identity. Michael Minkenberg (1994:179, italics in original) asserts that "in the context of new economic uncertainties and the emergence of the 'two-thirds' society in west Germany, neo-conservative cultural and political elites launched efforts to define German national identity in demarcation of the New Left's approach to a post-national identity and a 'constitutional patriotism' by emphasizing the traditions of a German *Kulturnation* and a *völkisch* nationalism."[6] Lilly Weissbrod (1994) adds that:

> the targets of [xenophobic] attacks are not confined to potential competitors on the labour market. In fact, everything un-German is targeted, though to a lesser degree than foreigners who are particularly visible. Targets include foreign students, such as the Angolan student killed in November 1990, and attacks against students at the Goethe Institute in Berlin in September 1992, Jewish memorials to the Holocaust and Jewish cemeteries, as well as Leftists who are considered internationalists, and therefore anti-German, homosexuals and, most recently, even

> the handicapped (the latter two are un-German by Nazi racist standards). [Also], the slogans and symbols used do not speak of economic hardship either. 'Foreigners out' is accompanied by 'Germany for the Germans', not by 'jobs for the Germans' and the meaning is made more explicit by shouts of '*Sieg Heil*', the Nazi salute, and swastikas. (p. 226, italics in original)

The above quote illustrates the cultural, as opposed to economic, nature of the conflict in which German neo-Nazis are participating (also see Willems, 1995:171, 180). German citizenship laws are predicated on the the notion if *ius sanguinis* (blood relations [Minkenberg, 1994:174-75]). In other words, those citizenship laws are consistent with the popular myth that there is "an uninterrupted bloodline running from the Germanic tribes all the way to modern Germans" (Hueglin, 1997:139). Although various polls have demonstrated that the German populace was disturbed in the early/mid-1990s by the rapidly growing foreign population that immigrated to their country (Betz, 1994:80), dedicated neo-Nazis were obviously among those who were most distraught by this trend. Thus, like their American counterparts, German Right-wing extremists are intent on making their country a homogeneous and exclusively "pure German" territory. Economic issues certainly are of importance to German extremists, but symbolic and cultural concerns are at the forefront of their discourse. Their implicit goal is to restore the national pride that the German people lost following Germany's defeat at the end of the Second World War (see Childs, 1996:210; Schmidt, 1993: chap. IX; Schoenbaum and Pond, 1996:7).

Michael Minkenberg (1994) notes:

> In the east, the 1989 revolution and the rapid process of unification have deeply challenged culture patterns in the (former) GDR and contributed to losses of identity at various levels. Because of the west German takeover strategy both the old socialist identity which was often transformed into adaptation, cynicism, and retreat into the realm of privacy, and the newly emerging democratic revolutionary identity were lost. But, with the discovery of the capitalist realities, the image of the 'Golden West' that provided a constant threat to the legitimacy of the old regime, was also lost. Clearly, this 'identity crisis' in the east opens opportunities to compensate the socio-economic hardship and bleak perspectives with romanticising the past, or with hyper-nationalism and the search for scapegoats – scapegoats which are readily available in the form of Western 'colonisers' and in the form of old and new foreigners in the country. (p. 184)

The above quote makes the links between Right-wing extremist participation and the search for personal and collective identity that much more evident.

Researchers have frequently argued that youth participation in subcultures is a form of identity quest. This is true of the skinhead subculture as well (D. Moore, 1994; Woden, 1995:11-12; Young and

Craig, 1997). Yet since I am primarily interested in Right-wing extremist movements, and not with the more specific subject of youth subcultures, I will refrain from addressing the symbolic concerns of the latter in this thesis. I assume, however, that my discussion of the factors that contribute to the emergence of Right-wing movements, and the characteristics of these movements, generally apply to both German and American skinheads as well.

Individual Action

NSM theorists claim that "the relation between the individual and the collective is blurred" (Johnston *et al.*, 1994:7). In other words, movement goals frequently are furthered by individual action rather than the large-scale mobilization upon which labour movements relied. This blurring appears to be true of Right-wing extremism as well as other NSMs.

One may be tempted to view the sieges conducted by crowds of youths on hostels and refugee shelters in Hoyerswerda (September 1991) and Rostock (August 1992) in the former GDR (the latter lasted three days), or the demonstration in Fulda (ex-FRG, August 1993) in which an estimated 500 - 1000 neo-Nazis participated (Weissbrod, 1994:225) as examples of extreme Right mass mobilization. Although a number of copycat crimes occurred in the time frames immediately following the events at Hoyerswerda and Rostock, these imitative actions took place on a smaller scale, as the lack of media coverage and the large number of violent incidents in the early 1990s indicate. Furthermore, even though 90% of investigated cases reveal that racist violence is perpetrated by groups rather than individuals (Willems, 1995:168), there is no evidence to support the suggestion that these attacks are planned and coordinated, nor that the groups of offenders are of a sufficiently large size to warrant the use of the expression "mass mobilization" when discussing their efforts. Hoyerswerda, Rostock, and even Fulda are exceptions, rather than the rule.

In spite of the relatively low proportion of offences that are committed by individuals with explicit ties to Right-wing ideological groups, one can still suggest that individuals perpetrate racist crimes implicitly in the name of "the movement," insofar as the acts conform to a social current that is commonly

associated with Right-wing extremism. The notion of a movement as a social current is related to the distinction between "linear" and "fluid" movements. More specifically:

> Linear movements present the image of a straight line narrative. The movement is a means toward an end. . . . The movement is perceived as associational. . . . Fluid movements are much more difficult to specify. Since they imply changes in how values and realities are conceived, they occur outside or in addition to organized and directed action. . . . They occur in the myriad actions of everyday life . . . (Gusfield, 1994:64)

Thus, ethnocentristic and/or criminal youths who have only a partial affinity for Right-wing ideologies and slogans still further the aims of the movement by behaving in a way that promotes the ideals of dedicated activists (also see Bjørgo, 1995b:5).[7]

The same goes for Right-wing violence in America. The archetypal example of an individual who acted in the name of a movement in the American context is Timothy McVeigh, who has been convicted for the part he played in the Oklahoma City bombing. McVeigh was extremely disenchanted with the American government. His favourite novel was *The Turner Diaries*, written by William Pierce (the leader of the National Alliance) under the pseudonym of Andrew McDonald. The book tells the story of an American White supremacist paramilitary organization that initiates a full scale race war by first destroying a federal building. In the novel, Pierce describes in detail how a federal building was destroyed by a truck bomb. The similarities between Pierce's novel and the actual event, including the type of vehicle McVeigh used, the weight of the bomb, the type of explosive used, and the timing of the explosion are striking (see Abanes, 1996:152). Although McVeigh and both his accomplices Terry and James Nichols allegedly attended Michigan Militia meetings, the latter deny that the three were members of their group (Marks, 1996:103). Yet it is interesting to note that "when questioned about the bombing, Tim McVeigh initially gave only his name, rank, and date of birth. As it happens, this is in the instructions for Prisoners of War in a manual published by the Michigan Militia" (Marks, 1996:103). Whether or not McVeigh and his accomplices acted on their own or in conjunction with other groups, the result is the same: their *individual actions* advanced the movement's aims.

Marks (1996: chap. XII) and Smith (1994: chap. 4-5) document a number of other episodes of violence for which Right-wing extremists have been responsible. The late Gordon Kahl of the Posse Comitatus was a farmer and fervent anti-tax protester who "believed that the Internal Revenue Service was

a collection agent of the Federal Reserve System, which, in turn, was a private corporation run by Jewish bankers" (Marks, 1996:117). Kahl was incarcerated once for failing to pay his taxes. On 17 February, 1983, he gunned down two federal marshals near Medina, North Dakota. The marshals had an arrest warrant for Kahl, who had violated his probation orders. Kahl perished four months later in another shootout with authorities, taking the life of a third officer with him. Kahl firmly adhered to the doctrines of the Posse, and these he followed to his death. Since his demise, Gordon Kahl has become:

> a martyr for the right wing cause. The 1983 Aryan Nations World Congress was centered around talk of revenge for the killing of Gordon Kahl. The death of Gordon Kahl, perhaps more than any other single incident, began the trek of the extreme right down the path to criminal violence. The Order was [born] shortly after the 1983 Aryan Nations Congress, the beginning of an era of violence in the right wing. (Marks, 1996:118; also see Corcoran, 1990; Smith, 1994:58)

Once again, Kahl's case illustrates how individuals act on the behalf of broader movements.

The activities of the Right-wing terrorist group known variously as The Order or The Silent Brotherhood further illustrate the tendency for Right-wing movements adherents to mobilize on a small scale. The deeds of The Order resulted in the largest number of indictments against individuals who belong to a Right-wing organization in the United States. Twenty-eight individuals were indicted for their participation in The Order's campaign of violence, which lasted several months following the group's inception in October 1983 (Smith, 1994:33). "The Order robbed and plundered to raise funds for a revolutionary movement to establish a white American homeland" (Marks, 1996:118). Members of The Order also were responsible for the perpetration of three homicides (including those of a Missouri state trooper and Jewish radio talk show host Alan Berg [Marks, 1996:118; also see Flynn and Gerhardt, 1989; Martinez, 1988; Smith, 1994:66-76]). The formation of The Order and the activities in which the group engaged were, much like the Oklahoma City bombing, inspired by the writings of William Pierce (Smith, 1994:67). Even though a relatively large number of organized extremists mobilized according to a plan during The Order's campaign, one can hardly view this as comparable to the mass mobilization that was produced by the protest movements of the 1960s. Thus, like other NSMs, the aims of Right-wing extremist movements are primarily furthered by the actions of individuals and small groups, rather than by mass mobilization.

Right-Wing Extremism and the Personal

According to Johnston *et al.* (1994), some NSM theorists contend that participation in NSMs often is likely to lead to profound changes in the personal and intimate aspects of an individual's everyday life. More specifically:

> Movements focusing on gay rights or abortion, health movements such as alternative medicine or antismoking, New Age and self-transformation movements, and the women's movement all include efforts to change sexual and bodily behavior. They extend into arenas of everyday life: what we eat, wear, and enjoy; how we make love, cope with personal problems, or plan or shun careers. (Johnston *et al.*, 1994:8)

Alberto Melucci is a particularly strong advocate of this position (see especially Melucci, 1989).

The applicability of this point to Right-wing extremism, and even NSMs other than those mentioned in the above quote, is uncertain. Perhaps I am reaching, but I presume that participation in Right-wing extremist movements could have an impact on the intimate recesses of one's life due to the identity concern that underlies participation in NSMs (including Right-wing extremism). Indeed, the American white supremacist discourse specifies gender roles, which certainly affect the way movement participants experience individual interaction (see Daniels, 1997: chap. 3). In Germany, the pillars of the New Right ideology are nation, people, family, and order (Schmidt, 1993:186). Whether these pillars (and family in particular) apply to and have an influence on the individual lives of German neo-Nazis is open to speculation. Most members of the German and American extreme Right, however, are staunch anti-abortionists (see Daniels, 1997:67-69; Marks, 1996:125-26; Mushaben, 1996:256). For women who are closely related to Right-wing adherents, this anti-abortion stance partially determines the range of options they have concerning decisions they make with respect to their own bodies. Also, support for and/or participation in acts of interpersonal violence is likely to have an influence on one's intimate relationships (see Gibson, 1994:37; Hastings, 1997). Social psychological research will have to determine the extent to which NSM participation has an impact on individual affect.

Nonviolent protest?

The sixth distinctive characteristic of NSMs Johnston *et al.* (1994:8) identify is how their "use of radical mobilization tactics of disruption and resistance . . . differ from those practiced by the working-class movement." They add:

> New social movements employ new mobilization patterns characterized by nonviolence and civil disobedience that, while often challenging dominant norms of conduct through dramatic display, draw equally on strategies influenced by Gandhi, Thoreau, and Kropotkin that were successfully used in the past. (Johnston *et al.*, 1994:8)

Scholars usually associate Marxist movements with attempts to violently overthrow those who are in power. Although many NSMs may indeed have developed innovative and nonviolent protest strategies, the above quote suggests that *all* NSMs have adopted these nonviolent strategies. Of course, the authorities in different contexts have different criteria for determining what represents "violent" and "nonviolent" behaviour. In Germany, for example, the penal code considers the use of blockades as a violent act, which is not the case in America. I have already provided numerous examples, in this and the previous chapter, of the extreme Right's use of force (a more or less universal component of definitions of violence) to achieve its objectives and to mobilize other movement members and potential recruits. Indeed, the rhetoric of the American extreme Right is overtly violent. Yet some Leftist NSMs have had their equal share of violent activism (e.g., animal rights activists, the Red Army Faction and others in Germany [Chalk, 1996; Smith, 1994:128]). Without going into any details, suffice it to say that the characterization of NSMs as nonviolent does not apply to either the German or American extreme Right, and analysts may have overstated the idea among Left-oriented NSMs. Although as a rule Left-wing as well as Right-wing political activists in general (i.e., not necessarily extremist) favour the use of nonviolent tactics over violent ones, both camps have their violent fringes.

Political Discontent

The seventh characteristic Johnston *et al.* (1994:8) ascribe to NSMs is that they epitomize the public's dissatisfaction with its limited access to and influence on the conventional modes of decision making in Western democracies. The NSMs represent attempts to participate in societal decision making

processes and to influence the social order from outside the conventional democratic channels. Right-wing extremists in Germany as well as the U.S. definitely exhibit frustration with and even outright opposition to the political systems of their respective countries. Yet since this assumption of NSM theory is equally found in the political process approach that is a part of the RM paradigm, I will reserve a more detailed discussion of the theme of political dissatisfaction for Chapter 3.

Diffusion and Decentralization

Finally, Johnston *et al.* (1994:8) argue that "in contrast to cadre-led and centralized bureaucracies of traditional mass parties, new social movement organizations tend to be segmented, diffused, and decentralized." NSMs are allegedly nonhierarchical in structure (Johnston *et al.*, 1994:9). Right-wing extremist organizations are indeed segmented, diffused, and decentralized. The sheer number of organizations that exist in the U.S. (see Anti-Defamation League, 1988; Kaplan, forthcoming; Marks, 1996), and the informal and non-binding contacts those organizations maintain, as well as their geographical distribution and instances of multi-organizational fragmentation (e.g., as illustrated by the various and sometimes antagonistic Ku Klux Klans), reveal the extent to which the American extreme Right is in fact segmented, diffused, and decentralized.

There are hints that the German extreme Right is more centralized and less diffuse than its American counterpart. Lilly Weissbrod (1994) states:

> The agility with which [a neo-Nazi] demonstration in Fulda circumvented police intervention points to a central organisation, as do the large weapon and propaganda material caches discovered. Most recently, a list of targets, including Leftists and public figures opposed to neo-Nazi aims, was published in the newsletter *Einblick* and distributed countrywide to various groups whose diverse names are suspected to be a cover for a single organisation, the Gesinnungsgemeinschaft der Neuen Front (New Front of Common Conviction). (pp. 226-27, italics in original; also see Skrypietz, 1994:136)

That the German movement appears more centralized and less diffuse than the American one should not come as a total surprise. In terms of geographical space, Germany is much smaller than the U.S., which makes interpersonal and inter-group contact as well as member mobilization that much easier. Also, there is a greater degree of ideological unity among German extremists when compared to their American

brethren. The absence of Christian Identity, Klan, and citizen militia groups in Germany effectively limits the selection of ideological groups that potential recruits may consider joining.

Right-wing extremist groups are apparently more hierarchical than Left-wing NSMs. Skrypietz (1994:137, italics in original) observes that "the GdNF [New Front of Common Conviction] is strictly hierarchical, according to the *'Führerprinzip'*: the members are required to carry orders without question." The hierarchical structure of German extreme Right organizations allegedly has enabled these organizations to successfully launch an historical revision campaign, to organize paramilitary training that would provide the basis for a new SA *(Stürmabteilung*, storm troopers), and to plan and execute attacks on foreigners like those that took place at Rostock and Hoyerswerda, among others (Skrypietz, 1994:137). In the American context, academics have produced virtually no research on the intra-organizational workings of White supremacist groups. Yet the charismatic influence of Identity pastors over their flock, of "Grand Dragons" and "Imperial Wizards" over the their Klansmen, and of a host of other authority figures with exotic titles over their followers, suggest that American groups are hierarchical as well.

Thus, although Left-wing NSM organizations may be segmented, diffused, decentralized, and nonhierarchical, one can only apply these characteristics selectively to Right-wing extremist groups. Right-wing organizations appear to be hierarchical in both Germany and the U.S., but the latter are more segmented , diffused, and decentralized than the former.

The Core Propositions of NSM Theory

Proposition #1: The emergence of NSMs in the Western world is related to the advent of a post-industrial society there.

Alain Touraine, one of the most influential European scholars in the field of social movement research, first postulated the above thesis in 1969, in a book called *La société post-industrielle: naissance d'une société* (Post-industrial society: Birth of a society). Touraine (1969:7) writes that contemporary Western societies are post-industrial in the sense that many features of these societies differ significantly from the societal types that immediately preceded them, although elements of the latter continue to exist in the former. He adds that one should refer to post-industrial societies as "technocratic" societies if we wish

to discuss them in terms of their system of governance, or as "programmed societies" if we wish to identify them according to their primary mode of production. Touraine (1985) adds:

> A broad occupational definition of an information society is misleading and cannot justify the idea that a different society is taking shape. On the contrary, post-industrial society must be defined more strictly by the technological production of symbolic goods which shape or transform our representation of human nature and the external world. For these reasons research and development, information processing, biomedical science and techniques, and mass media are the four main components of postindustrial society, while bureaucratic activities or production of electrical and electronic equipment are just growing sectors of an industrial society defined by production of goods more than by new channels of communications and the creation of artificial languages. (p. 781)

Thus, bureaucratic activity and the industrial production of material goods illustrate the continuity of elements of industrial society within post-industrial society, while the development of higher research, information processing, biomedical science, and mass media technologies demarcate those elements that constitute a distinct and exclusive part of post-industrial society.

Moreover, the transition from industrial to post-industrial society has created fundamentally new social conflicts. In Touraine's (1985) own words:

> The public space – *Öffentlichkeit* – strictly limited in a bourgeois society, was extended to labor problems in an industrial society and now spreads [in post-industrial society] over all fields of experience: private life becomes public and . . . the main political problems today deal directly with private life – fecundation and birth, reproduction and sexuality, illness and death, and, in a different way, with home-consumed mass media. . . . The distance between civil society and State is increasing while the separation between private and public life is fading away. (pp. 778-80, italics in original)

Thus, NSMs arise to challenge the increasing regulation of private life by the State. NSMs are able to mount this challenge because the mode of production in programmed society endows the dominated subjects with a greater capacity for self-reflexivity, and with the means to communicate to other people the thoughts and impressions they garner via this process of self-reflexivity. The focal point of the struggle between NSMs and their adversaries is historicity (identity), and NSMs wage this struggle in the arena of "civil society." Unfortunately, Touraine never does provide an adequate definition of "civil society" in his work (Cohen, 1985:701). Jean Cohen (1985:700) suggests that Touraine views civil society "in action terms as the domain of struggles, public spaces, and political processes. It comprises the social realm in which the creation of norms, identities, and social relations of domination and resistance are located." Yet

this discussion of the struggle in which NSMs are engaged ties in directly with the second core proposition of NSM theory, which I will discuss in the next section.

To what extent is the emergence of Right-wing extremism in Germany and the United States linked to large scale socio-structural change? According to Hans-Georg Betz (1994:27), the decline of Communism has enabled capitalism to break through on a global scale. The globalization of the economy has consequently rendered it difficult for governments to control their respective economies.

Advanced information technologies have accelerated the cadence of economic globalization. The increasingly information-driven character of contemporary Western societies has had a dramatic impact on the composition of the work force. Whereas industrial societies relied on mass production and had a large industrial (i.e., material production) sector, post-industrial societies possess larger service and information sectors, as well as a more flexible and specialized system of material production. The shift from industrial to post-industrial society has therefore "entailed a bifurcation of the labor market into core and periphery sectors, into highly demanding and attractive jobs and skill-poor and undesirable 'junk jobs'" (Betz, 1994:28).

Until the recent emergence of the crisis of the welfare state in Western European democracies, high standards of living and of social security characterized life in these nations (Betz, 1994:28). Yet these high standards have significantly altered traditional patterns of social stratification while simultaneously activating "processes for the 'diversification' and 'individualization' of lifestyles and ways of life" (Ulrich Beck, quoted in Betz, 1994:28). Modern educational curricula have contributed to the erosion of traditional patterns of stratification and interaction. Formal education is more accessible now for most citizens than ever it was in the past, and the educational system is structured in such a way that it accentuates the value of personal effort and merit. The emphasis on individual achievement in the educational system is perfectly in sync with the demands of the labour market. "The spread of formal education has heightened the sense that qualifications are interchangeable, thus forcing individuals to advertise the individuality and uniqueness of their accomplishments" while seeking employment in a highly skilled and competitive market (Betz, 1994:29).

Betz (1994) asserts:

> As a result of these developments, established cultures, milieus, and institutions, which traditionally provided and sustained collective identities, are getting eroded and/or are being destroyed. Fixed identities [e.g., class position] are giving way to a "flux of contextualized identities," related to gender, ethnicity, sexual preference, and life-style. They find their reflection in the ambiguous imagery created by postmodern culture. Its central features are the collapse of high into mass culture, advertising, and fashion, the emergence of various taste cultures, and the individualization of choice and life-style. By hyping up the new, fleeting, and contingent in modern life, rather than the more solid values of the past, and by promoting individuality in choice and life-style, culture both fosters and reproduces the fragmentation of the economic and social spaces of post-industrial consumer society. (p. 29; also see Willems, 1995:176-77)[8]

Yet in spite of the rise of an individualistic culture that corresponds to labour market requirements, occupational trends in Germany indicate that a particular segment of the society will find itself increasingly marginalized. More specifically:

> Though the emergence of postindustrial society has led to a significant expansion of jobs in human- and consumer-oriented services, it has also generated a seemingly persistent high level of structural unemployment, increasing underemployment, and a widening gray area between the registered and unregistered unemployed. Equally significant consequences are the rapid obsolescence of skills, continuous pressure on the individual to retrain and reskill, and slow and modest gains in real wages. . . . Unemployment statistics show that already in the 1980s, there was a close relationship between professional qualification and the likelihood of unemployment. In Germany, for example, in 1987 the proportion of unemployed unskilled labor was twice as high (18 percent) as that of skilled workers; that of skilled workers was roughly twice as high as that of persons with technical or master craftsmen certificates, which in turn was roughly twice as high as that of persons with university or polytechnical degrees. (Betz, 1994:30-31)

For the chronically unemployed, the requirements of participation in the post-industrial job market can only exacerbate their marginal circumstances. Those categories of people who are unable or not inclined to meet the exigencies of programmed society are most likely to experience frustration, insecurity, and animosity toward the system (Betz, 1994:33). For many, these negative emotions are expressed in terms of a lack of confidence in the established political parties, which have had difficulty finding solutions to specific issues (e.g., unemployment, immigration,...) that are of concern to the masses and that are not easily incorporated into pre-established agendas (Betz, 1994:33-35). Thus, the disaffected seek to make their voices heard either by voting for populist parties or by resorting to methods that lie beyond the realm of electoral politics. Participation in a social movement is one way to challenge the established socio-political order from outside the conventional institutional channels. I will address the issue of public

dissatisfaction with institutional politics and the emergence of social movements in greater detail in Chapter 3.

The above interpretation of social movement emergence clearly is visible in Germany. West Germany experienced a great deal of economic stability between 1960 and the mid-1970s, which created the basis for a "class compromise" in German society, a general "acceptance of market capitalism in exchange for job stability and welfare security, at times mediated in corporatist arrangements between capital, labour, and the state" (Hueglin, 1997:144). In other words, individuals accepted their role in society (including their class positions) in exchange for social and economic stability. The government made deep cuts in social spending following the oil crisis of the mid-1970s (note the global impact of regional economic decisions, i.e., those made by certain Middle Eastern countries), and economic restructuring continued well into the early 1980s under Chancellor Helmut Kohl's CDU/CSU government. The government implemented etatistic regulations to resolve the economic crisis, which resulted in increasing and persistent levels of unemployment. At that point, the public realized that the great class compromise had come to an end.

Consequently, the particular circumstances in which people found themselves led to their preoccupation with specific issues or concerns that a direct impact on their lives. Thomas Hueglin (1997) declares:

> This [preoccupation with specific issues] strengthened both the emerging party of the Greens who eventually appeared in the Federal Parliament (*Bundestag*) in 1983, and some 50,000 citizens' initiatives (*Bürgerinitiativen*) and social movements, which by the end of the 1970s comprised nearly as many members as the established parties. But, far more citizens became politically disillusioned and turned to conservative pipe dreams of a wholesome world of simple explanations and traditional values. This meant that the large establishment parties underwent a sharp move to the right. (p. 145, italics in original)

Hueglin (1997) adds:

> In other words, new social movements, and the societal minorities they represented, held on to a participatory idealism that challenged the mainstream vision of a vigilant state protecting an insecure society from disorder. This became the political climate of "desolidarization" (*Entsolidarisierung*), in which toleration of outsiders and losers thinned. Resentment not only turned against cultural challenges from foreigners and asylants, but also against what was perceived as the deviant behaviour of, among others, feminists and homosexuals. These and other groups did not really challenge the majority in power, but they challenged the moral and symbolic order in which society could feel secure. (p. 145, italics in original)

This, then, is the post-industrial context out of which contemporary Right-wing extremism has emerged in Germany.[9] Yet the structural changes that have been taking place in Germany are due to more than the transition from industrial to post-industrial society. Indeed, factors related to German reunification have also contributed to the emergence of Right-wing extremism there. I will address these factors in greater depth in Chapters 3 and 4.

The U.S. has experienced the transition from industrial to post-industrial society as well. Over the course of the Twentieth Century, "two-thirds of the labor force has been displaced from the production of goods. About 20 million new jobs were created in the 1970s, but only about 5 percent of those were in manufacturing, while nearly 90 percent were in the areas of information, knowledge, or service" (Lauer, 1992:383; also see Caplow, 1991:87; Farley, 1996: chap. 3). In the past twenty years, the labour market has been increasingly specialized and diversified. Of particular relevance to this thesis, the mechanization of agriculture has significantly reduced the need for farmers in America (Lauer, 1992:383). Reynolds Farley (1996:72) observes that "at the end of World War II, more than eight million persons labored on farms, accounting for one in eight workers. Among men, one in six worked in agriculture. Within fifteen years, that number was cut in half." Theodore Caplow (1991:87) maintains that the overall proportion of the work force that farmers represent has remained constant. Nevertheless, for those that were involuntarily displaced from their livelihood in agricultural production (i.e., who may have lost the family farm), the experience must have been disheartening. Many American farmers have also faced economic hardship throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Some of these debt-ridden farmers have been attracted to hate groups, which provide scapegoats against whom the dispossessed can direct their anger (Corcoran, 1990; Marks, 1996:24-25; Young, 1990). Gordon Kahl is a prime example of a farmer who fell under dire circumstances and then participated in the Right-wing extremist movement (via his membership in the Posse Comitatus). One should note that the majority of Right-wing extremist groups in the U.S. emerged during the 1970s and 1980s (i.e., at the same time as the farm crisis), and that many are active in the farm belt and/or try to pursue a "pure" lifestyle by living off the land in remote compounds, presumably as an attempt to maintain continuity with a past and idealized mode of existence.

Another trend that American extremists are rebelling against is the increasing proportion of the population of American cities that Blacks and other ethnic/racial groups represent. The proportion of the urban Black population has risen steadily throughout the century, to the point where Blacks are now the majority in some cities. For example, blacks represented 27% of the population of Washington D.C. in 1930, 54% in 1960, and 70% in 1980 (Caplow, 1991:189). This trend, however, is not directly related to advent of post-industrial American society.

Finally, I have already illustrated in the first chapter of this thesis how post-industrial telecommunications technologies have heightened the self-reflexivity of Right-wing extremists and how they have contributed to the emergence of Right-wing movements. One can therefore conclude from the previous discussion that a link does in fact exist between the advent of a post-industrial society in the West and the emergence of contemporary Right-wing extremism. I must stress, however, that the process of post-industrialization does not affect societies in a uniform way (see Esping-Andersen, 1991). Nevertheless, for the purposes of this thesis, it is only necessary that the reader understand that post-industrialization has occurred to a certain degree both in Germany and the U.S., and that it has had an impact on contemporary Right-wing extremism in each country. I will discuss the implications of this finding in the "Summary and Observations" section at the end of this chapter.

Proposition #2: All social movements are engaged in the same core conflict

Alain Touraine is the strongest proponent of this proposition, and Alberto Melucci adheres to it implicitly. Yet since they are both among the most influential NSM theorists, I consider the proposition as a central assumption of NSM theory in general, although all NSM theorists may not necessarily embrace it in its entirety. Touraine alleges that all NSMs are involved in the same struggle to wrest control of the right to articulate the identities of their members from the post-industrial technocracy, and hence to challenge the norms of civil society.

The assumption that all social movements are engaged in a common struggle is related intrinsically to Touraine's definition of the term "social movement." Recall from Chapter 1 that Touraine (1981:77) defines a social movement as "the organised collective behaviour of a class actor struggling

against his class adversary for the social control of historicity in a concrete community." Also recall that Touraine claims that there are only two social movements in a given society at any one time: that of the dominant class (the technocracy), and that of its subjects. Historicity refers to the "overall system of meaning which sets dominant rules in a given society" (Touraine, 1981:81). In other words, Touraine conceptualizes "social movements as normatively oriented interactions between adversaries with conflicting interpretations and opposed models of a shared cultural field" (Cohen, 1985:695). Moreover, a social movement (that represents the subjects) is genuine *only if its goal is to challenge the norms of civil society*. According to Touraine, a social movement never has as its primary objective the modification of laws and policies (i.e., its objectives are not institutional). Rather, a social movement seeks to limit the control that the technocracy exercises over its subjects by attempting to minimize the number of "realms of everyday life" over which the technocracy can impose legislation.

Touraine's rationale for defining the term social movement in a narrow fashion is related to the concepts of synchronic and diachronic axes:

> Touraine introduces an analytical distinction between the "pattern of development" of a society (diachronic axis) and its modes of functioning (synchronic axis). The state, system crises, and conflict behavior opposing elites to masses are situated on the first dimension. Social relations, and the "system of historic action" – that is, the conflictual processes by which norms, institutions, cultural patterns are created and contested by social actors – are situated on the second dimension. Accordingly, the type of collective action in which Touraine is interested and for which he reserves the term "social movement" are struggles around cultural patterns involved in the present functioning of society. (Cohen, 1985:698)

Touraine therefore provides other designations for conflicts that are not structured around the technocracy and the social control of a society's main cultural patterns.

Under the label "sub-movements," Touraine (1985:751-764) includes conflicts that focus on the progressive pursuit of collective material interests or on institutional change. In contrast to sub-movements, Touraine reserves for movements that arise to preserve the *status quo* or that seek to reconstruct or defend a social, cultural, or political identity against a "foreign" adversary (rather than the technocracy) the designation of "anti-movement." Sub-movements and anti-movements are active in the synchronic sphere. At the diachronic level, one finds the positive and negative versions of "historical conflicts." These are, respectively, nationalist and neocommunitarian movements. These movements operate in the diachronic

sphere "because the identity and continuity of a changing, developing country cannot be based on social actors and social relations which are precisely transformed, destroyed, or created by the process of historical change – for example, of industrialization. State and nation are the only actors who can maintain their continuity throughout a process of change" (Touraine, 1985:757-58). All forms of movements must, however, conceive of themselves in terms of the principles of identity, opponent, and totality in order to qualify as movements (see Chapter 1).

In post-industrial society, the struggle over historicity pits the technocracy against its subjects. The technocracy consists of those who control the accumulation, allocation, and use of information. They are linked to the state by virtue of the weight their knowledge and resources have on political decisions (Touraine, 1969:70-71). The subjects consist of the information users and processors (i.e., the rest of society). Whereas "merchant" societies and industrial societies had "metasocial guarantees of order" (e.g, the "order of things," divine rule, natural law, historical evolution) upon which previous social movements could justify their objectives, post-industrial society has no such metasocial guarantees due to the pluralistic, postmodern mindset that characterizes the era (Touraine, 1985:778). Thus, the masses are able to contest the identities and roles that the technocracy imposes upon them. Any movement that attempts to articulate alternate identities and lifestyles in civil society therefore challenges the vision of the technocracy and acts on behalf of the latter's subjects.

Touraine (1985:756; 1992) argues that one cannot dissociate any struggle at the synchronic level from its roots in a class conflict. Cohen (1982) summarizes Touraine's position in the following way:

> Social relations are no longer understood in terms of position in the structure of labor or relation to the means of production. Rather, they are seen as normatively oriented interaction between adversaries within a cultural field open to opposed interpretations. Thus Touraine redefines the concept of class in terms of a general theory of social action, dissociating it from economic mechanisms, structural contradictions, or imputed interests. . . . Accordingly, classes are defined purely in terms of social action, as the social division and relation between those who identify historicity with their own interests and those who seek to regain control of historicity that has been denied them. Struggles over historicity . . . constitute the class relations of each system of historical action. "Class struggles" and "social movements" are synonymous expressions for the conscious contestation involved in the "self-production" of society or the work society (sets of social actors) performs on itself by inventing its norms, its institutions, and its practices. (pp. 212-13).

Touraine (1969:72-73) stresses that the technocracy need not always be seen in the pejorative way that "capitalists" were in Marxist analyses. Indeed, the technocracy and its subjects may at times truly see eye to eye and may even work cooperatively. The point Touraine is trying to make is that although the relationship between the dominant and subordinate classes is not entirely antagonistic, the tensions that exist between them produce and continually redefine the symbolic codes as well as the form of the society in which they live. Touraine's conceptualization of class effectively allows him to avoid the problems associated with the identification of "class consciousness" that plague Marxist analyses, and it likewise enables him to avoid the historical determinism of Marxism (Cohen, 1982:215). To further support his formulation of contemporary class conflict, Touraine (1981:95) claims that "the greater the diversity of the struggle, the more each society is animated by a single movement for each class." In other words, *each class consists of a single movement*, and the greater the number of identities that are being contested, the more unified will the respective social movements be in the struggle over historicity.

There are a number of weaknesses in Touraine's theory. Cohen (1982) notes:

> the old problem of criteria for identifying the unity of class struggles underlying the variety of contestations within a society returns. The tensions between "system" and "class," order/change and social movements, is not resolved but simply displaced by action theory. It reenters in the very definition of society vis-à-vis a single shared cultural model (why one?) contested by two (why two?) opposing social classes. If one proceeds from the purely immanent analysis of social contestation, as Touraine insists one must [Touraine refuses to incorporate structural factors in his analyses], the action theorist is faced with a dilemma. Having screened out any reference to system or structure, practical philosophy or evolution theory, the action theorist is left with no means for identifying the unity of struggles underneath the multiplicity of contestations of a society. (pp. 215-16)

One can further criticize the identification of two social classes and one core struggle on several grounds. The first is that the "subordinate social movement" will inevitably identify the technocracy as its adversary. In support of Touraine, Melucci (1995a) argues:

> Submerged networks in everyday life create and practise new meanings. The production of new codes *challenges the dominant logic of technological rationality*. These networks are the laboratories in which other views of reality are created. They emerge only on specific grounds to *confront a public authority* on a given issue. (p. 114, italics added)

Touraine and Melucci both overextend the relevance of technological rationality and the technocracy in their accounts of movement emergence. Although I agree that many contemporary movements are in fact

producing their own symbols and codes, I do not believe they are necessarily doing so as a response or challenge to technological rationality (does the majority of the population feel that constrained by technological rationality?), nor that they view the "technocracy" as their opponent (does the so-called technocracy really impose specific identities on their subjects?). Moreover, to claim that *all* social movements follow this pattern also seems unlikely (see Bartholomew and Mayer, 1992:150-52). The methodology Touraine has developed in order to obtain empirical confirmation of his theory, known as sociological intervention, is highly suspect.

Sociological intervention is performed in the following manner:

> The researcher must engage his/her subject not as mere observer, nor even as participant-observer, but as interlocutor and activist. In the field, the sociologist has the task of engaging activists within the social movement being examined in a prolonged series of discussions aimed at making the subjects reflect upon the meaning of their actions, and ultimately raising those to a 'higher level of struggle.' (Scott, 1991:40)

Dieter Rucht (1991a:374) adds that "because it is captured by its ideology and visions of utopia, the group itself is apparently not able to reach the level of historicity by its own means." The sociologist must therefore discretely suggest to the activists what their "higher purpose" really is, and must gauge their reactions to the suggestion. Touraine does not revise his theory in light of empirical observations. Either the movement in question must change their perceptions of themselves in order to fit into his framework, or they simply cannot be designated as "genuine social movements." For example:

> Touraine is clear that the anti-nuclear movement starts out as a defensive reaction motivated by fear of accident and ecological disaster. Were it to remain so, however, the movement would retain its localized character, and tend to dissolve itself at the local level each time a nuclear power station was either built, or successfully opposed. In order to attain the status of a full social movement as Touraine defines it, the anti-nuclear movement would have to (i) clearly define a social group in whose interest it fights – mere fear of catastrophe is too abstract in appealing to humanity as a whole; (ii) define an enemy with whom it engages; (iii) develop an alternative, but not regressive, model of modernity to the technocratic one on offer. (Scott, 1990:63)

Because the anti-nuclear movement failed to do so (see Scott, 1990:64), Touraine could not consider it as representing a true social movement. Yet since one cannot categorize the anti-nuclear movement as a sub-movement, an anti-movement, or a historical movement, then one must inevitably wonder just what exactly it is. Many social movements that conform to Diani's synthetic definition of the term simply do not qualify

as such in Touraine's scheme, and for purely arbitrary reasons. Also, one must wonder how and why Touraine has privileged knowledge about the highest meaning and unity of a social movement, while the movement participants themselves usually view their actions as discrete or discontinuous rather than unitary (Cohen, 1982:216; Rucht, 1991a:378). Jean Cohen (1982:216) calls Touraine's approach "sociological Leninism." Others find it similar to psychoanalysis (Rucht, 1991a:375-76).[10]

Second, to attribute the status of "opponent" to the technocratic class implies that one should view the technocracy as a unified, homogeneous entity with shared goals and strategies. After discussing examples of both intended and unintended government support for social movements, Gary Marx and Douglas McAdam (1994:100) assert that "it would be a mistake to see the various components and branches of the state as always acting in consort either to oppose or support a movement." This presumably applies to Touraine's vision of the technocracy as well, because of its ties to the State and thus the bond they share as elements of the "ruling class."

Third, and as I have alluded to above during my discussion of the method of sociological intervention, "social movement demands are so diverse in their ideologies and the nature of their demands that there is little realistic possibility that they will form a single coherent opposition" (Scott, 1990:67). Also, even though I have excluded groups that are active in the sphere of institutional politics from my analysis, there is no justification for restricting the term social movement for groups that primarily target civil society, as Touraine does (see Bartholomew and Mayer, 1992:149; Kriesi, Koopmans, Dyvendak, and Giugni, 1995; Scott, 1990).

Michel Wieviorka has studied racism in Polish and American labour movements (Wieviorka, 1995) and terrorism (Wieviorka, 1993) from a Tourainean perspective. He analyzes these phenomena as anti-movements. If one were to analyze contemporary Right-wing extremism from a Tourainean perspective, it could probably only be in anti-movement terms as well. Although Right-wing extremists (especially in America) have developed conspiracy theories that identify the State as the enemy and they have at times engaged in violence against the State, they are also defending their ethnic identities against the threat they *perceive people of other ethnic and/or racial backgrounds* (i.e., not the technocracy) pose to them (see Bjørgo, 1995a:4). Touraine (and Wieviorka) view anti-movements as forms of "negative"

conflict behaviour. He insists that they are "negative" because they are "inherently self-destructive" and "doomed to fail" in their endeavours (see Touraine, 1985:762-63). This view of Right-wing movements and anti-social action is very judgemental and presumptuous, to say the least. One must wonder how exactly Touraine evaluates the "success" of a movement.[11] Based on the counter-evidence I presented above, I must argue that the proposition that all NSMs are participating in the same "core societal conflict," and hence Touraine's conceptualization of the term "social movement," are untenable.

Summary and Observations

In this chapter I reviewed and evaluated the qualitative distinctions between "old" and "new" movements, as well as the core propositions of the NSM paradigm. I argued that the American and German Right-wing extremist movements have many characteristics in common with Left-wing NSMs. As with Left-wing NSMs, demographic and social factors other than class form the bases of Right-wing extremist membership and action. In Germany, 95% of Right-wing extremists are males between the ages of 16 and 30. Based on limited data, the gender ratio in the American movement appears comparable to the German one, but the average age of the former is higher (39) than that of the latter. Likewise, while many American extremists appear to possess lower levels of educational achievement and come from agriculture-related occupations, German extremists are more dispersed in terms of levels of educational achievement and occupational status (see Willems, 1995:171). I will explore these differences in age and occupational status in greater detail in Chapter 4. Also, Right-wing extremism is an almost exclusively heterosexual movement.

Although Right-wing extremists on both sides of the Atlantic have a similar philosophy, the various movements and "sub-movements" (I do not use this term in the Tourainean sense) are not united by an overarching and totalizing ideological framework. Rather, their ideas and values reflect a degree of ideological pluralism, and they are pragmatic in their selection and application of strategies.

I criticized the idea that one could distinguish "old" movements from "new" movements based on their orientation toward material or symbolic concerns. Indeed, the "old" movements had symbolic and/or cultural concerns of their own, even though these were not as prominent in their discourse. Also, and as

Andre Gunder Frank and Marta Fuentes (1987:1503) suggest, working class movements are in fact recent and probably ephemeral, while the more culturalist have in a sense existed throughout history and are thus more enduring. Nevertheless, to the extent that contemporary "NSMs" are primarily concerned about issues that pertain to identity and culture, one can observe the same identity quest in Right-wing extremist movements.

Like Left-wing NSMs, Right-wing extremist movements do not make use of mass mobilization to the extent that earlier movements did. Rather, movement goals are more often furthered by individual or small group action that is committed in the name of a movement or its ideals. I suggested that participation in Right-wing extremist movements probably has a significant impact on the intimate aspects of one's life, but that further social psychological research is required to verify the veracity of this assumption for both Right- and Left-wing movements. Also, I argued that even though many NSMs have developed innovative and nonviolent protest strategies, nonetheless some Leftist movements do make use of violent means to achieve their ends. Right-wing movements are particularly predisposed to engage in violent action. I therefore recommend that one not use nonviolence as a criteria for distinguishing between old and new movements.

I agreed that both German and American Right-wing extremist movements, like many Leftist NSMs, are a manifestation of discontent with the established system of institutional politics. I decided, however, to address this point in greater depth in the next chapter because this assumption also surfaces at times in research conducted from the RM paradigm. Finally, I argued that Right-wing organizations are apparently more hierarchical than Leftist NSMs, but that their respective organizational structures are generally diffuse, decentralized, and segmented. All in all, one can legitimately view Right-wing extremism as a type of NSM.

As far as the core propositions of the NSM paradigm are concerned, I agree that the emergence of contemporary Right-wing extremism is related to the rise of a post-industrial society in the West. Yet one can just as easily conceptualize the role of post-industrial society in movement emergence in terms of the new strains and grievances it produces. One need not develop an entirely new paradigm to account for "post-industrial strains." In Chapter 5, I will illustrate how one can incorporate the post-industrial thesis of

the NSM paradigm within the broader framework of relative deprivation theory. Moreover, I believe that I successfully refuted the second core proposition of NSM theory, which is based on Touraine's notion that there is but one core conflict in society which polarizes all social movements into opposed factions, that of the technocracy and that of its dominated subjects. Thus, there are no propositions left from which one might develop a unique paradigm.

Yet the NSM "paradigm" does have its strengths. The first is Melucci's constructivist approach to movement emergence, which I did not address in this chapter.[12] Yet as with the post-industrial thesis, nothing prevents one from combining the constructivist perspective with other approaches. The second contribution of NSM theory is the attention it pays to symbolic and cultural concerns, to the realm of movement ideas and their role in movement emergence. This discussion of social movement ideas and values has traditionally been taken for granted by the RM paradigm. The strengths of the approach, however, are tempered by additional weaknesses. As a paradigm that supposedly stresses the cultural dimension of movement activity, it does not specify how culture (as distinguished from identity) affects social movements. Touraine merely asserts that the conflict in which he alleges NSMs are engaged occurs in the cultural sphere (i.e., as per his discussion of the related concepts of historicity and civil society). Also, Touraine and Melucci both overemphasize the extent to which contemporary movements shun institutional action. I will discuss the concept of culture and its impact on movements in Chapter 4.

Chapter 3: A Critical Evaluation of the Resource Mobilization Paradigm

In the early 1970s, the resource mobilization (RM) approach became a significant force in American social movement research. The approach was rooted in the genesis of new intellectual currents that paralleled the rise of the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s and that of the peace movement in the early 1970s (Garner, 1997:18). Whereas the classical structural strain paradigm that guided social movement research from 1940 until the late 1960s viewed social movements as irrational phenomena, primarily due to the inability of academics to make sense of the atrocities of the Nazi regime as well as the belief that movements challenged the "consensually established" and hence just norms of society, RM theorists saw the Civil Rights and peace movements as having rational aims and tactics. Indeed, although the majority of American sociologists may not have participated directly in the Civil Rights and peace movements, most were at the very least sympathetic to the goals these and other Left-wing movements espoused, especially those that sought to extend basic citizenship rights (Garner, 1997:19; Mayer, 1991:80; Zald, 1992:331). Because academics tend to view themselves as the epitome of rationality, then the movements for which they felt sympathy must equally have possessed a measure of rationality. Thus, scholars developed a new framework which would analyze social movements and their adherents as rational actors. Carol McClurg Mueller (1992) reports:

> Almost immediately the new paradigm dominated publications on social movements and collective action in the most prominent journals of sociology and political science. For the decade of the seventies, over half (56 percent) of the social movement and collective action articles in the *American Sociological Review*, the *American Journal of Sociology*, *Social Forces*, and the *American Political Science Review* were based on the theoretical approach of resource mobilization, but by the early eighties it was almost three-quarters. (p. 3, italics in original)

The current dialogue over the potential integration of RM and identity oriented paradigms reveals that as we near the 21st Century, the RM paradigm continues to retain its vitality.

Jean Cohen enumerates succintly the principle assumptions of the RM paradigm. According to Cohen (1985):

> (1) Social movements must be understood in terms of a conflict model of collective action. (2) There is no fundamental difference between institutional and noninstitutional collective action. (3) Both entail conflicts of interest built into institutionalized power relations. (4) Collective

> action involves the rational pursuit of interests by groups. (5) Goals and grievances are permanent products of power relations and cannot account for the formation of movements. (6) This depends instead on changes in resources, organization, and opportunities for collective action. (7) Success is evidenced by the recognition of the group as a political actor or by increased material benefits. (8) Mobilization involves large-scale, special purpose, bureaucratic, formal organizations. (p. 675)

There is obviously no reason why one could not apply the above assumptions as equally well to contemporary Right wing extremism as to other social movements. Yet as I alluded to in the introductory chapter of this thesis, only Thomas Ohlemacher (1994) and Werner Bergmann and Rainer Erb (1994a) have discussed Right-wing extremism from a RM framework. Many RM and NSM scholars, due to their own personal biases, are unwilling to grant contemporary Right-wing extremist movements the status of "genuine social movements." Most sociologists who have analyzed "traditional" Nazism have studied it more narrowly as a strictly political or social psychological object of inquiry, and scholars have never applied RM theory to German National Socialism.

In the following pages I will examine and criticize the assumptions of the RM paradigm in greater detail. In spite of the empirical emphasis the RM paradigm places on Left-wing movements, the above assumptions are themselves "movement generic." One can contrast this "movement generic" formulation of assumptions with the characteristics and propositions concerning NSMs found in NSM theory, which scholars originally developed to account exclusively for contemporary Left-wing movements. I therefore will only provide specific examples of the application of RM assumptions to Right-wing extremism where circumstances warrant it. In addition to the propositions of the classic RM perspective, I also will discuss political process theory and the framing perspective, two approaches to social movement research that investigators generally associate with the broader RM paradigm.

The Propositions of RM Theory

The Context of Social Movement Action

The assumption that "social movements must be understood in terms of a conflict model of collective action" is self-explanatory and, I think, irrefutable. The existence of a variety of social

movements indicates that society is characterized by competing and sometimes conflicting interests, rather than by consensus. A conflict perspective of society, however, does not automatically imply that the RM perspective is rooted in a Marxist focus on class struggles nor that its theorists adhere to an evolutionary view of social history (Kitschelt, 1991:330). Conversely, the existence of conflict in society does not prevent consensus from developing between certain societal segments on particular issues, nor does it prevent persistent and widely shared norms of conduct from emerging in society.

The RM conception of conflict is consistent with the one Alain Touraine proposes. That is to say, RM theorists would agree with Touraine that the tensions that exist between various groups ultimately produce and continually redefine the norms, institutions, and the form and content of the symbolic codes of the society in which they live.

The Similarities Between Institutional and Noninstitutional Collective Action

The second and third assumptions of RM theory Cohen identifies are intrinsically related. According to Mayer Zald (1992:331), who is one of the leading figures in the RM paradigm, collective action is not "discrete and separate" from political action. Rather, social movements pursue "political goals with means appropriate to their situation" (Zald, 1992:331). Elsewhere, Zald (1991:352) states that "movements without strong and immediate political goals may not develop the formal organizations and parties, the explicit coordinating structures, that others do." The reference to a lack of "strong and immediate political goals" presumably is an attempt to assert the relevance of RM processes to social movements that currently target the cultural/symbolic sphere as opposed to the political/institutional sphere, as is the case with many NSMs. Yet Zald's statement still implies that movement goals are ultimately political, even though some are not as "strong" or "immediate" as those of other movements. Thus, in contrast with the NSM perspective, RM theorists believe that social movements are primarily active at the institutional level, where one should expect them to produce concrete reforms in policy, legislation, or decision making processes. The emphasis on institutional action stands in contrast with the classical perspective on social movements as well as NSM theory, both of which stress the noninstitutional aspects of movement activity.

Charles Tilly, Louise Tilly, and Richard Tilly (1975:240) contend that a social movement's entire "repertoire of contention" (its range of protest strategies), including violent activism, are merely an extension of "normal politics." Moreover, RM theorists generally emphasize the similarities between collective and conventional behaviour rather than the differences (Piven and Cloward, 1992:301-02). Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward criticize the assumption that protest is "normal." They argue:

> protest is indeed "outside of normal politics" and "against normal politics" in the sense that people break the rules defining permissible modes of political action. Of course, the distinction between normative and nonnormative is not always easy to draw because norms themselves are often ambiguous, and no more so than when they become the focus of conflict and renegotiation. Still, a riot is clearly not an election rally, and both the participants and the authorities know the difference. (Piven and Cloward, 1992:303)

The relevance of the above quote for Right-wing extremism is obvious. Piven and Cloward (1992:301) do not deny that there are "continuities between conventional social life and collective protest." As a matter of fact, they agree that continuity between the two often is the case. What they criticize, however, is the *overemphasis* that RM theorists place on the similarities between conventional behaviour and collective protest, and their tendency to overlook the differences that distinguish one from the other. Piven and Cloward (1992) observe:

> an exposition of the similarities between the structure of everyday life and the structure of protest is not an explanation of why people sometimes live their everyday lives and other times join in collective defiance. And it is, of course, precisely this theoretical problem that is central to the MI ["malintegration," another name for the classical structural strain paradigm] analyses that RM analysts disparage; it is nonnormative collective action - disorder and rebellion - that MI analysts want to explain. (p.302)

Although classical theorists overstate the irrational aspects of disorder and rebellion, one finds that the respective emphases classical and RM theorists place on the noninstitutional/nonnormative and institutional/normative dimensions of social movement activity merely reflect the different focal points of their analyses, rather than an irreconcilable ontological disagreement about their object of study.

The debate over the extent to which collective action is or is not an extension of conventional behaviour is academic rather than empirical in nature, and therefore has little direct relevance to the substantive study of Right-wing extremist movements. Suffice it to say, however, that the aims of contemporary social movements are far from being predominantly institutional. This last observation does

not negate the fact that many culturalist movements actively mobilize resources, even though they may not wage their struggles in the institutional sphere where larger resource pools arguably are more important than in the cultural sphere.

Resource Mobilization Theory and Rational Choice

RM theory is grounded in the basic principles of rational choice theory. In Zald's (1992) own words:

> behaviour entails costs; therefore grievances or deprivation do not automatically translate into social movement activity. The weighing of costs and benefits, no matter how primitive, implies choice and rationality at some level. Mobilization out of the routines of social and family life, out of work and leisure, is a problematic. (p. 332)

Rational choice theory is predicated on the assumption that human actors follow a utilitarian logic when they make decisions. They seek to maximize their returns and minimize their costs, and hence act accordingly. The economist Mancur Olson (1965) was the first to apply a rational choice model of human behaviour to collective action. Olson's overriding concern was to find a solution to the "free rider problem." Myra Marx Ferree (1992:30) summarizes the free rider problem in the following way: "collective benefits alone [are] insufficient to motivate a rational actor because free riding on the efforts of others would provide the same share of collective goods at less cost to the individual, and that (by definition) a rational actor would expect his or her efforts to contribute only imperceptibly to provision of the collective good at all." That argument is one of the reasons why RM analysts downplay the importance of grievances in their explanations and instead focus on the mechanisms that enable collective action. It is interesting to note, however, that RM theorists selectively fail to quote a passage from Olson's study where he deems that many social movements are in fact "irrational" (Ferree, 1992:30).

Although one may understandably be tempted to label Right-wing extremists as irrational by virtue of the conspiracy theories they espouse and the terrorist violence they perpetrate, there is a method to their madness. Some movement participants may in fact be psychotic, but one cannot pejoratively "psychologize" an entire movement that comprises tens of thousands of followers. Identity Christian thought and Nazi doctrine have distant historical roots in nineteenth century esoteric lore that have

nevertheless been developed and transmitted in the same way that more conventional ideas are propagated, albeit through a more selective audience (see Anderson, 1995; Barkun, 1989, 1994; Figueira, 1991; Goodrick-Clarke, 1985; Sklar, 1989; Valade, 1981).

Bruce Fireman and William Gamson (1979) criticize Olson's approach for overemphasizing the importance of self-interest in mobilization and for minimizing the relevance of variables like solidarity and principle. Fireman and Gamson (1979:21) conceptualize *solidarity* as "a sense of common identity, shared fate, and general commitment to the group" that stems from "the configuration of relationships linking the members of a group to one another." They define *principles* as that subset of collective goods that "may be perceived as an entitlement, as something deserved as a matter of justice, equality, or right" (Fireman and Gamson, 1979:26). Yet even though they acknowledge that the terminology of "goods" and "costs" may be less satisfactory for a discussion of the role of solidarity and principles in group mobilization, they still use that terminology "in order to confront the utilitarian argument more directly" (Fireman and Gamson, 1979:32). In spite of their intentions, the language of the RM paradigm remains firmly rooted in utilitarian terminology and assumptions. Many flaws permeate RM's construction of rationality:

> Conventional microeconomics define rationality with reference to a simplifying but misleading postulate, namely, that individuals will always act to maximize their personal benefits and reduce their costs. This is not a testable proposition since the theory offers no rules for measuring preferences independent of the choices made. Whatever it is that people choose, they are said to do so because they "prefer" this alternative. This includes relabeling rather than explaining behavior: apparently irrational choices are said to reflect idiosyncratic "tastes" that are treated as exogenous and uninteresting – that is, in no need of explanation. (Ferree, 1992:30)

Thus, rational choice explanations are tautological. Furthermore, they fail to take into account the contextual differences in perception and the impact of structural differences in power between individuals within organizations (Ferree, 1992:31; Kitschelt, 1991:333).

Also, some people consciously engage in behaviour that they know goes against their best interests. For example, one who decides to indulge in pleasurable activity may be well aware that he or she will later regret having taken this decision, yet may do so regardless of the negative consequences he or she anticipates. Ferree (1992:32) contends that the inclusion of impulsive and self-defeating behaviour in decision making models can only enhance the validity of these models. More specifically:

> To recognize that all people do behave impulsively and irrationally at times enriches the account of rationality that can be given by including the individual and organizational problems of anticipating, managing, and reacting to such tendencies. Insisting on training in nonviolence is one obvious instance in which movement organizations attempt to anticipate and control noncalculated and self-defeating (but entirely satisfying) responses to provocation. Although social movement participants are no more or less irrational than anyone else, achieving a measured and rational response is an *accomplishment*. This is not well understood by defining all behavior as rational. (Ferree, 1992:32-33, italics in original)

Ferree (1992:33) further notes that academics have long made a distinction between "value-rationality" and instrumental, utilitarian rationality. The former differs from the latter in that it places priority on ends and values as opposed to means. In other words, value-rationality is based on moral commitments. These commitments often involve the denial of pleasure or other immediate rewards in the names of cherished values, and faithful adherence to these values for some is a reward in itself. As I have alluded to when discussing the contributions of Fireman and Gamson to RM theory (also see Friedman and McAdam, 1992), RM is unable to account for the influence of noninstrumental concerns in social movement participation, and it therefore recasts these factors in terms of extrinsic incentives. This theoretical reductionism distorts the role noninstrumental factors play in decisions to engage in collective action (Ferree, 1992:34, 39).

The motivations of American Right-wing extremists are primarily intrinsic and they reflect value-rational thought. Indeed, they tend to view people who are "driven" by instrumental rationality in antagonistic terms:

> Bureaucracy, faceless Communism, liberal-Benthamite "pointy-headed intellectuals," and "pen-pushing political appointees" are seen by patriots as functional [instrumental] rationality incarnate. They are emblematic of the decadent, antiheroic pursuit of the greatest good for the greatest number and the sacrifice of absolute principles. . . . Better the earth be destroyed in its entirety than duty to Race, God, and Constitution be compromised (Aho, 1990:76,italics added).[1]

Thom Robb told those present at the 1986 Aryan World Congress that "we can not offer you pay, pleasure, or power" (Robb, quoted in Aho, 1990:76). Rather:

> We can only promise you the dishonorable titles traitor, criminal, crazy; the promise of being despised, ignored, and even killed; economic hardship and misunderstanding. If you are in the struggle because you anticipate victory, you are in for the wrong reason. You should be in the movement out of a sense of duty toward our children. Our duty in life is to assure a peaceful life for our children. There is a war in America today. In one camp is the federal government headed

> by the Jew. Their goal is to destroy us. There is no middle ground. There is only right and wrong (Robb, quoted in Aho, 1990:76).

The audience reacted enthusiastically to Robb's speech. The above quote definitely reveals the importance that American Right-wing extremists attach to value-rationality.

I do not deny that some organizations and adherents within the movement have utilitarian aims. James Aho (1990:77) notes that Right-wing extremist groups like the Church of the Aryan Nations, among others, have launched successful business ventures based on the sale of cassettes, literature, and other paraphernalia. Yet as Aho (1990:78) remarks, "there are far easier and less personally risky ways of making fortunes than by dramatizing one's political eccentricities." Utilitarian aims are therefore unlikely to be the main motivation behind Right-wing extremist participation.

Ferree summarizes a number of other weaknesses that one can find in the rational choice assumptions of RM theory. Due to constraints of time and space, however, here I will only address what I think is the most important one. RM theory's decontextualized approach to the study of individual participation in social movements produces a framework that is predicated on the notion that a pseudo-universal individual exists. "Feminist theory emphasizes that the values that appear most "rational" and "objective" today are those derived from the experiences of nineteenth-century, white, Western, middle-class men. Rational choice theory itself embodies such values" (Ferree, 1992:41). Hence, the assumption that all "rational" individuals are motivated first and foremost by utilitarian concerns and that they consequently seek to maximize their returns while minimizing their costs reflects the androcentric bias that feminists have associated with a great proportion of Western knowledge and values. Citing the work of Nancy Harstock and other feminist theorists, Ferree (1992) writes:

> giving theoretical primacy to contract relationships and the choices made by independent individuals is possible only by imagining a "state of nature" made up of unrelated adults. But no one is born that way. Our first and most fundamental human relationships are those of trust and dependence as infants, and any society that will reproduce itself has to create the conditions under which such diffuse obligations will be satisfied. If mother-and-child, rather than adult male, is seen as the basic human unit, community does not seem so fraught with difficulty, nor does competition seem the archetypal human emotion. Harstock and others identify a fundamental androcentric bias in the assumption of independent adults as the basic social actors, rather than acknowledging infant dependency and the human community as our universal history.
>
> Infants are hardly the only people without sufficient resources to survive on their own; individualism has not only a gender but also a class bias, expressing the perspective of the

> modern bourgeoisie. Evidence about preindustrial societies suggests that most forms of social organization are based in group needs to manage given interdependencies to ensure collective survival rather than in some perception of individual advantage. (p. 36)

The above statement effectively turns the free rider problem on its head and suggests that understanding why one would not feel more compelled by the idea of contributing to the collective good than to one's self-interest is an equally valid problematic. Indeed, Ferree (1992:38) cites empirical evidence indicating that in many circumstances, the selective incentives RM analysts insist are crucial to movement participation are actually unnecessary or even irrelevant. Also, she argues convincingly that well-socialized actors will also weigh the consequences that actions motivated by self-interest may have on others (e.g., friends and family) before they actually pursue them, and that contribution at no personal cost to the well-being of others will only increase one's personal satisfaction (Ferree, 1992:38-39). Ferree (1992:31) claims that models of rationality that view self- and other-regarding behaviours as structurally situated are "more consistent with the macrolevel organizational emphasis of the resource mobilization approach, but [do] not reduce individuals to unthinking resources to be manipulated by a movement organization as it sees fit." Finally, RM theory is unable to address commitment that is based on identity (Ferree, 1992:40).

To recapitulate:

> Rational choice theory . . . defines cold, dispassionate calculation as the preferred mode of accurate decision making and emotion as something that interferes with good decisions. It typically contrasts "sentimental attachments" against "rational interests" and thus not only devalues the former but obscures the ways in which community relations and rootedness are, for many people, inseparable from their self-interest. (Ferree, 1992:42)

That is not to say that instrumental considerations are never related to social movement participation and activity. Nor does Ferree's critique imply that we must do away with the RM paradigm in its entirety. Indeed, a focus on the structural dimensions of movement emergence is essential for a complete analysis of movement emergence. Also, a cost-benefit analysis of movement mobilization is at times useful. For example, Werner Bergmann (1994:271) notes that for those young Germans who felt resentment toward foreigners, the "benefits" of participation in racist violence were greater than the costs because the risk of being caught and punished were relatively low (see the section on "Political Process Theory" later in this

chapter for more details). Thus, we need not completely abandon the RM model of rationality, since it may be applicable in specific circumstances.

One may question the extent to which rational choice theory and RM theory mirror each other, and hence the extent to which Ferree's critique of rational choice theory applies to RM as well. According to Ferree (1992):

> Although specific departures from some of the assumptions of the rational choice model are frequently made, the underlying premises of rational choice are evident in the language and overall research agenda of RM, its focus on incentives, obsession with free riding, distrust of emotionality, and excessively bureaucratic view of social movement organizations. From this perspective, one sees social movements as ad hoc groups of self-interested, pseudo-universal individuals calculating their short-term gains and losses. (p. 47)

Ferree's main point is that the RM paradigm overstates the role of instrumental rationality in movement emergence, and that in light of its biases and tautological reasoning, the RM paradigm may need to reconceptualize the concept of rationality if the approach is to have any explanatory power (cf. Zald, 1992:333). As with the institutional/conventional assumption of RM I discussed previously, the questions I have highlighted above are primarily academic in nature and do not directly affect the conceptualization of Right-wing extremism as a social movement. The debate is more accurately about the characteristics of human behaviour in general.

Grievances and Social Movement Formation

RM theorists focus on the processes that enable collective action rather than the social conditions (i.e., deprivation and frustration) that allegedly contribute to its emergence, as classical theorists do, because the former claim "that there is little or no relationship between variations in relative deprivation and the pace and timing of collective protest" (Piven and Cloward, 1992:305). Anthony Oberschall ([1978] 1993:47) states that "grievances and disaffection are a fairly permanent and recurring feature of the landscape" (also see Marx and McAdam, 1994:81; McCarthy and Zald, [1977] 1987:17-18). He adds that "social, economic, and political change *act indirectly* upon incidence and forms of conflict *by changing the mobilization potential* of various social formations, by changing the social milieu and ecological locus of

conflict, and by changing the social control locus of the authorities" (Oberschall, [1978] 1993:47, italics added).

Although they do not deny that social movements are often linked to social crises, McCarthy and Zald view the existence of grievances as a constant (especially in the American context). They "want to move from a strong assumption about the centrality of deprivation and grievances to a weak one, which makes them a component – indeed, sometimes a secondary component – in the generation of social movements" (McCarthy and Zald, [1977] 1987:18). They allege that factors other than grievances and deprivation have more weight in explanations of social movement emergence. It is interesting to note, however, that some RM scholars are not entirely convinced about the RM critique of grievance-based theories, and have therefore used terms such as "intensified grievances" and "suddenly imposed grievances" (among others) that are very similar to concepts employed by classical theorists (Piven and Cloward, 1992:308).

Also, the evidence upon which RM theorists rely to support their claims that deprivation and frustration are weak factors in movement emergence is flawed. According to Piven and Cloward (1992):

> The empirical basis for this claim rests in no small degree on the widely accepted evidence presented by [Charles] Tilly and his collaborators, especially their time-series studies of the relationship between "breakdown" variables, such as intensified hardship or rapid urbanization, and the pace and timing of collective protest. But MI analysts do not claim that breakdown is a necessary precondition of normative forms of group action. What they emphasize instead is that breakdown is a precondition of collective protest and violence, of riot and rebellion. Any effort to test breakdown theories must therefore employ a dependent variable in which normative and nonnormative forms of collective action are disaggregated, which Tilly and his collaborators do not do. In effect, the MI tradition is being dismissed for an argument it never made. (pp. 305-06)[2]

Moreover, Tilly and his associates did not distinguish between the initiators and the victims of violence. While relative deprivation theorists often are concerned with violent movement activism, Tilly and his associates actually measured violence (or counterviolence) that was perpetrated by the authorities (Piven and Cloward, 1992:307). Thus, the nature of the relationship between social movements and frustration is still open to debate. Grievances may remain a primary feature of social movement analysis, rather than a weakly emphasized factor that is at best "secondary" to resource mobilization processes. I will discuss the concept of relative deprivation and its role in movement emergence in greater detail in Chapter 4.

Social Movements, Resources, Organization, and Opportunities

The RM paradigm stresses that the degree of access social actors have to resources, their potential to organize, and the political opportunities that open up to them will predict more accurately when a social movement will emerge than will occurrences of strain or deprivation. McCarthy and Zald ([1977] 1987:18) define resources in terms of access to labour and money. According to McCarthy and Zald ([1977] 1987:18), "because resources are necessary for engagement in social conflict, they must be aggregated for collective purposes." Although I generally agree with that proposition, it is more applicable to movements that are active in the institutional sphere as opposed to the cultural sphere (Kitschelt, 1991:335). Moreover, that proposition fails to take into account the fact that some movements tend to be more fluid than linear. RM theory deals exclusively with linear movements (i.e., those that have an associational form, as opposed to fluid movements that primarily consist of attitudinal currents).

Nevertheless, even some movements that arguably are more culturalist than political, including Right-wing extremist groups, actively amass resources to maintain their associational forms and activities. Extremist groups frequently resort to illegal activities to fund their operations. Members of The Order committed a string of armed robberies in the Western United States in 1983-1984 with which they netted over three and a half million dollars (Smith, 1994:68-71). They in turn used some of the funds to purchase weapons, and they redistributed a portion of the funds to other Right-wing groups (Smith, 1994:71, 92). CSA members have been convicted of trafficking in stolen vehicles and manufacturing silencers and automatic weapons (Smith, 1994:66). Smith (1994) explains that:

> All terrorist groups face financial difficulties. Once a group goes underground, monetary support can seldom be maintained by routine employment; criminal activity becomes essential if a group is to survive. (p. 68)

Elsewhere, Smith (1994:92) adds that "one successful robbery can finance terrorist organizations for extended periods."

Ingo Hasselbach, a former East German neo-Nazi, describes some of the strategies the National Alternative used to acquire financial resources:

> The storming of our house by the antiterror unit had one consequence the State couldn't have been too pleased about: it made the National Alternative famous. Within a few weeks our bank account increased fivefold, as money from new members and the press – which we charged for interviews – rolled in. Suddenly, we were able to pay the attorneys for our endless court cases.
>
> Journalists from all over the world wanted to do reports about the house in Weitlingstrasse, and I was giving up to four interviews a day, as well as staging press conferences in the lobby of our building. The fee for one-on-one interviews was 200 to 1,000 marks. If they wanted Hitler salutes or Nazi songs, that was extra. (Hasselbach, 1996:145)

The National Alternative also received financial support from a group called the German Cultural Community, which was composed of academics, attorneys and doctors who grew up during the Nazi era, "many of whom had been children of high-ranking Nazis" (Hasselbach, 1996:146-48). In addition to financial resources, American and German Right-wing extremists aggressively seek new recruits (see Hasselbach, 1996: chap. 22; Smith, 1994:90-91). For example, in a passage I quoted for different purposes in chap. 2, Brent Smith (1994:51) states that members of The Order and CSA "were drawn to these organizations by the lure of a place to stay and a modest monthly salary in exchange for work at the compounds" (also see p. 63).

Second, RM theorists contend that a social movement is an organized collective rather than something that has roots in spontaneous mob behaviour, as classical theorists sometimes suggest. In this and the previous chapter I have demonstrated that German and American Right-wing extremists indeed are part of a relatively organized movement. In this very section I have discussed in general terms some Right-wing extremist mobilization tactics, the existence of which is indicative of at least a minimal degree of organization within the movement.

Finally, RM theorists contend that political opportunity structures play a salient role in movement emergence and mobilization. I will reserve a discussion of political opportunity structures for the section on political process theory that appears later in this chapter.

Social Movement Success

According to RM theorists, one can measure the success of a social movement by observing the degree to which the authorities come to recognize it as a legitimate player in the realm of institutional politics, or by the increased material benefits the movement experiences. I agree with Kitschelt (1991:339)

when he argues that this evaluation of movement success is based on a narrow conception of social movements that is of limited use for the analysis of contemporary movements. The RM position on success completely overlooks the noninstitutional, cultural goals of many contemporary movements. It is based on a purely utilitarian notion of success (consistent with the paradigm's other assumptions), which may be completely unrepresentative of what movement members themselves feel are the criteria for success. One must understand how actors construct their roles, their objectives, and the movements they participate in if one is to obtain a more accurate assessment of movement success, whether the movement is political or cultural (see Melucci, 1989). I am not denying that institutional legitimacy and influence on the development of policies and legislation can be indicators of success. The above criticism merely suggests that those criteria of success are too narrow and are not representative of the goals of many contemporary movements, including Right-wing extremism.

Social Movements and Formal Organizations

RM theory postulates that formal, bureaucratic organizations are required for the bulk of social movement activism. Throughout my discussions in this and the previous chapter, I introduced examples of both German and American Right-wing extremist organizations. Even though some organizations, like the Posse Comitatus, may number thousands of adherents, these organizations are rarely "bureaucratic" or "formal." Rather, I suggested in Chapter 2 that Right-wing movements, and the organizations within these movements, tend to be decentralized and segmented (especially the militias), and their respective degrees of "formality" are not always obvious (also see Weinberg, 1993a:190). Also in the previous chapter, I noted that contemporary "movement mobilization" more often takes the form of individual or small group action, which may or may not be related to the efforts of organizations. The RM emphasis on the role of SMOs (social movement organizations) effectively make these the primary object of RM analyses instead of social movements *per se* (Mayer, 1991:56, [1991] 1995:175; Piven and Cloward, 1992:319). Once again, the emphasis on formal organizations restricts the extent to which one can apply RM theory to culturalist as well as lower strata (i.e., low resource) movements.

A Few Remarks Concerning Criticisms of RM Theory

My account of the strengths and weaknesses of RM theory may appear to be overly critical. Yet I direct most of my criticisms at RM theory's failure to make its model applicable to culture-oriented movements that frequently are not active in the institutional sphere. I disagree that broadening the object of study of RM theory would weaken the explanatory power of the perspective. On the contrary, a wider focus would only strengthen its explanatory potential if it could specify how institutional and noninstitutional movements interact with their environments (i.e., whether and how they differ in their resource mobilization strategies). Otherwise, the perspective's main weakness lies in its conceptualization of rationality. Nevertheless, the RM view of rationality provided a much needed contribution in the sense that it "depathologized" movement participants in general. Also, the weaknesses in the RM conceptualization of rationality do not negate the value of the approach's main concern, its concern with "how" movements form and mobilize. That concern is equally valid for institutional and noninstitutional movements, as I indicated in the previous section.

Political Process Theory

Charles Tilly and Repertoires of Contention

The political process model of social movement emergence stresses that "the timing and fate of movements [are] largely dependent upon the opportunities afforded insurgents by the shifting institutional structure and ideological disposition of those in power" (McAdam, 1996:23). Many scholars consider it a branch of the RM paradigm because it links organizational capacity and the potential for resource mobilization to political opportunities (e.g., see Tilly, 1978:67). Some proponents of the model, like Charles Tilly, argue that socio-historical changes alter the institutional structure and ideological disposition of the ruling elites, which in turn lead to the development of new "repertoires of contention." The institutional structure and a society's elites respond more favourably to certain forms of contention and less favourably to other forms. Hence, the coincidence in time and space of specific repertoires of contention

with a particular institutional structure and ruling ideology will determine the extent to which there is a potential for movements to arise. Also, Tilly *et al.* (1975:49) suggest that discontinuity characterizes repertoires of contention of one historical era from those of another.

Because Tilly generally views historical change as the result of progressive forces, he associates the passage of time with the emergence of institutional arrangements, ideological dispositions, and repertoires of contention that are more conducive to the formation of social movements. According to Tilly and his collaborators (as cited in Piven and Cloward [1992]):

> in the preindustrial world, the possibility of exerting influence depended on "the willingness of [challenging groups] to inflict and endure harm," but the "grant of legality [to many previously proscribed forms of political action] lowers the group's costs of mobilization and collective action" (Tilly 1978,167). Consequently, what now "tells more" than inflicting and enduring harm is the "the group's capacity to organize, accumulate resources, and form alliances," especially within the electoral system (Tilly et al. 1975, 285). The implication is that ordinary people can now form organizations to pursue their goals through normal politics. (p. 315)

There are a number of flaws in Tilly's model. First, a progressive view of historical development many not apply beyond the context of Western societies, if one conceptualizes progressiveness in terms of increasing democratization. For the greater part of this century, industrialization (i.e., socio-historical change) did not come hand in hand with increased democratization or a proliferation of repertoires of contention in Communist countries, to identify but one example that casts doubt on Tilly's interpretation of the nature of societal evolution.

Second, Piven and Cloward (1992:311) remark that some forms of protest in fact demonstrate a high degree of historical continuity because they "require only minimal integration." The riot is but one example of a form of protest that has existed for many centuries. Piven and Cloward (1992) add:

> More generally, preindustrial food riots, grain seizures, land invasions, and machine smashing have rough parallels in the modern period with urban riots, mob looting, squatting, sit-downs, sit-ins, rent strikes, and industrial sabotage. This suggests that Tilly's argument that repertoires of protest change as societies change – old forms out, new forms in – needs qualification. Even as changing modes of social organization bring into being new forms of protest, certain persisting features of social organization facilitate continuities in other protest forms. (p. 311)

Likewise, Tilly's argument that greater access to institutional politics encourages and facilitates the emergence of organized social movements and hence lowers the costs of movement participation and mobilization may only be partially correct. Piven and Cloward (1992), quoting Tilly, write:

> True, with the grant of legality, the risk of repression no longer inhibits many forms of mobilization. At the same time, however, legalization increases the costs of mobilization because it imposes additional resource requirements. . . . In other words, to use conventional methods of influence effectively, people have to be able to muster the resources both to organize bureaucratically and to overcome the influence of other groups in regular political contests. These resources, Tilly says, are "the economist's factors of production: land, labor, capital, and perhaps technical expertise as well" (1978,69). By these criteria, however, lower-stratum challengers are obviously left with serious resource deficits (Piven 1963).[3] (p. 315)

As with other RM theorists, Tilly and Gamson (see note 3, *supra*) do not study the repertoires of contention that contemporary movements rely on to effect changes noninstitutionally in the cultural sphere.

The point I am making here is not that institutional and ideological configurations are irrelevant to the evolution of repertoires of contention or to the emergence of social movements. On the contrary, they are. Yet Tilly's conception of social movements and repertoires of contention, which has been highly influential in the field, does not form an adequate basis for a model of political opportunity and movement emergence that one can apply to institutional and noninstitutional movements in a variety of social and historical contexts, due to the reasons that I mentioned above (see Piven and Cloward [1992:308-320], for other criticisms that pertain to the findings of Tilly and Gamson).

Political Opportunity Structures

Doug Mc Adam (1996:26-29) proposes a more satisfying model of political process that is based on the work of Charles Brockett, Sydney Tarrow, Dieter Rucht, and Hanspeter Kriesi, Ruud Koopmans, Jan Willem Duyvendak, and Marco Giugni. These writers discuss the emergence of social movements in terms of their relation to the *political opportunity structure*. Tarrow (1996:54, italics in original) defines a political opportunity structure as "*consistent – but not necessarily formal, permanent, or national – signals to social or political actors which either encourage or discourage them to use their internal resources to form social movements*." He adds that "unlike money or power, this [definition] opens the possibility that even weak and disorganized challengers can take advantage of opportunities created by others to organize against powerful opponents (Tarrow, 1996:54). McAdam (1996:27) argues that the following four dimensions determine the political opportunity structure:

1. The relative openness or closure of the institutionalized political system

2. The stability or instability of that broad set of elite alignments that typically undergird a polity
3. The presence or absence of elite allies
4. The state's capacity and propensity for repression

Whether a movement will emerge and how it will fare depends not only on the way the above dimensions manifest themselves, but also on the particular social and historical context in which they occur. Thus, one needs specifics about the context out of which a movement emerges to generate testable hypotheses about the political opportunity structure. In some cases, all dimensions of the model need not even be present for actors to perceive a political opportunity that is conducive to the development of collective action. The dimensions are only four variables that some researchers find have an impact on movement emergence, whether as a whole, in combination with one another, or less frequently, in isolation from one another.

Political Opportunity Structure and Right-Wing Violence in Germany

Koopmans (1995b) argues that the political opportunity model is a useful tool for explaining Western European trends in racist violence. Koopmans states that the sudden influx of foreigners the country experienced in the early 1990s only became a concern for the general population once the political elites (i.e., the mainstream parties) defined the influx as a problem. He observes that the repatriation of 1.7 million *Aussiedler* ("descendants of the millions of ethnic Germans who migrated, often centuries ago, to Eastern Europe, the Balkans, and the territories of the former Soviet Union") between 1987 and 1993 caused little public outrage. Ironically, although the number of *Aussiedler* who immigrated to Germany during that period was greater than that of other foreigners (about 1.5 million of the latter immigrated to Germany during the same period), far more asylum seekers had been refused refugee status and therefore "outmigrated" from Germany when compared to *Aussiedler*, even though many *Aussiedler* are in several respects no more "German" than the other migrants (e.g., many do not speak German [Koopmans, 1995b:202]).

Koopmans (1995b) remarks:

> Despite all this, the contrast between the way in which the questions of *Aussiedler* and of asylum seekers were dealt with politically could hardly have been sharper. The problem of the rising numbers of *Aussiedler* was never dramatized, did not become a subject of inter-party fights, and the constitutional guarantees were never seriously called into question. In the end, the

> issue was dealt with by an administrative change in application procedures that went into force on 1 July 1990 and resulted in a sizeable reduction in the number of *Aussiedler*. The refugee question, on the contrary, became the subject of a [heated] debate starting in the Summer [sic] of 1991 with the Christian Democrats' (CDU/CSU) call for a restriction on the constitutional right to political asylum. This demand was justified by the claim that the large majority of asylum applicants (designated as 'phoney refugees' [*Scheinasylanten*] or 'economic refugees' [*Wirtschaftsflüchtlinge*]) had no political motives whatsoever and simply sought a better life in Germany. Whether or how true this claim was, is relatively insignificant. What is noteworthy is that although economic motives certainly played a role for many asylum applicants, they were equally if not more important for *Aussiedler*. Nonetheless, the 'phoney German' who does not speak German, or the 'economic *Aussiedler*' were never invented. (pp. 202-03, italics in original)

The conflict over German asylum policy destabilized the positions of the country's political elites (the CDU/CSU and the SPD [Social-Democrats]), while the far Right Republikaner party made its greatest gains during this period on an anti-foreigner platform.

Prior to June 1991, the German public was not overly concerned about issues pertaining to asylum or immigration. Approximately 10% of West and 5% of East Germans cited asylum/foreigners as the most pressing problem facing Germany (Koopmans, 1995b:203). Concern increased significantly following the political debates of the Summer of 1991. That trend became more evident immediately after the outbreak of racist violence that occurred in Hoyerswerda in September 1991. "In October 1991, the asylum/foreigners issue became the number one issue for the German public and remained in that position until August 1993, with scores up to 80 percent. In the East, the development was less pronounced, but even there asylum and foreigners came to be perceived as the second most important problem, surpassed only by unemployment" (Koopmans, 1995b:204). Nevertheless, due to their inability to compromise, the CDU/CSU and SPD failed to address the issue in a way that could appease the public until December 1992. At that point, the political elites compromised (lest the Republikaner's popularity should grow), and the constitution was radically amended so as to significantly restrict asylum rights (Koopmans, 1995b:203).

Yet in the midst of the crisis, "merely one out of five former West Germans still had confidence in political parties" (Betz, 1994:56; also see Kuechler, 1994:58, 70; Minkenberg, 1994:184-87; Mushaben, 1996:294; Weissbrod, 1994:231; Willems, 1995:178-79; Zimmermann and Saalfeld, 1993:62). It is worth noting that even Republikaner supporters had little confidence in the abilities of the party for which they had voted, although the majority felt it could deal with the foreigner problem most appropriately (Betz,

1994:17-19, 60). The fortunes of the Republikaner have been mixed. Internal turmoil and a failure to capitalize on key opportunities after the fall of the Wall effectively negated the gains the party made during the 1989 state elections in West Berlin and the European elections shortly thereafter (Betz, 1994:18). The party made a short-lived comeback when it captured more than 12% of the vote in the Baden-Württemberg state election and 8% in the local elections in Berlin (both in 1992), as well as the 8% it obtained in the local elections in Hesse in the spring of 1993 (Betz, 1994:19).[4]

The Republikaner's showing in the Baden-Württemberg elections "made them the third largest party in one of Germany's most affluent states" (Betz, 1994:19). Hence, "with that the Republikaner not only contributed to the losses of the two major parties, but also secured their position as the major party on the far Right of the German spectrum" (Betz, 1994:19). The Republikaner's main accomplishment is that it forced the political elites to preempt Right-wing oriented discourses and policies.

Yet a comparative analysis indicates that even at the "height of its success" (i.e., in 1992, at the peak of the "foreigner crisis"), the Republikaner's overall impact was relatively negligible. Indeed, between 1986 and 1993, Germany had the second lowest level of far Right voting when compared with Norway, France, Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, and the U.K. (only the latter had levels of radical Right voting that were lower than those of Germany [Koopmans, 1995b:207]).[5]

Thus, a political opportunity opened around the theme of German immigration and asylum policy in 1991-1992. Koopmans (1995b) contends that one can derive contradictory hypotheses from the political opportunity model:

> On the one hand, the construction of foreigners and refugees as a political problem may be seen as increasing the opportunities for both forms of extreme right and racist mobilization, which would lead us to expect a positive, but spurious, correlation between voting and violence. On the other hand, the opportunity model assumes that social movement participants make rational choices among available strategic alternatives to pressure political elites. Because violence is a relatively costly strategy in terms of risks of repression and of moral sanctions, we may assume that violence will be mitigated where less costly alternatives are available, that is where extreme right and racist parties play a significant role within the political system. (pp. 206-07)

According to West European statistics, the second hypothesis appears to be correct. "The country with the highest levels of violence, Germany, has the second lowest level of extreme right and racist voting, while

the three countries with the lowest level of violence (Norway, France, and Denmark) display the strongest support for extreme right and racist parties" (Koopmans, 1995b:207).

McAdam (1996:30) states that "a significant decrease in either the will or ability to repress tends to be related to the rise of non-institutionalized protest movements." This certainly appears to have been the case in Germany in the early 1990s. Although the constitutional court has the right to ban organizations and parties it deems are "anti-constitutional," it did not ban the *Nationalistische Front* (NF, National Front), the *Nationale Offensive* (NO), the *Deutsche Alternative* (DA, German Alternative), and the Comrades' League until November-December 1992 due to the federal government's delay in requesting these bans (Weissbrod, 1994:225).[6] More importantly, the banning of extremist organizations is relatively ineffective as a method of repression because members of banned groups simply reassemble under a different name until the authorities in turn ban the new organization (see Schmidt, 1993; Skrypietz, 1994:36-37). Thus, while the names of movement organizations may change, the contemporary German Right-wing movement itself appears to remain largely intact.

Also, according to Donatella della Porta (1996:72-78), the German police utilized less repressive tactics in the 1980s when compared to the tactics that prevailed during the Adenauer era (the 1950s) and the Grand Coalition era (1966-69). She asserts:

> My studies of police intervention in Berlin in the 1980s seem to indicate that the police looked for tactics that could avoid escalation, and that peacekeeping now clearly took priority over law enforcement. The police experimented with new tactics oriented mainly at isolating the violent wing of a demonstration rather than attacking nonviolent as well as violent protesters, and containing rather than charging potentially dangerous demonstrators (using police barriers or military isolation of areas where radicals held their meetings). (della Porta, 1996:76)

I do not deny that on occasion the police resorted to violence to deal with protesters. Indeed, they still did so at times (della Porta, 1996:77). Nevertheless, the trend in the 1980s was oriented toward the de-escalation of conflict as opposed to direct confrontation.

Evidence suggests that the police continued to utilize these non-confrontational tactics when dealing with large scale outbreaks of (neo-Nazi associated) racist violence during the early 1990s:

> During attacks against refugee hostels in Rostock, Quedlinburg and Hoyerswerda (ex-GDR), crowds of bystanders cheered the attackers on with chants of 'Germany for the Germans' and '*Sieg Heil*'. No such crowd support has been reported in the Old Länder, but police behaviour did not differ significantly in east and west. *During the above riots* in the ex-GDR, *the police*

> *hardly interfered*, nor did they in Fulda (ex-GDR), where 500 - 1,000 neo-Nazis held a demonstration on 14 August, 1993, while the *local police*, caught unprepared, *omitted to call in reinforcements deployed nearby and merely stood by*. . . .
>
> The judiciary has implicitly condoned [racist violence] by passing the lightest possible sentences. The federal government admits that violence against homes and hostels of foreigners has been treated as vandalism, rather than attempted murder, and offenders have been prosecuted as juveniles whenever possible (judges have discretion to regard persons aged 18-21 as juveniles [Weissbrod, 1994:225, italics added; also see M. Behrend, 1995; Bjørgo, 1995a:12; Neaman and Funke, 1993; Schmidt, 1993; Willems, 1995:165]).

Werner Bergmann (1994:271; also see Willems, 1995:179) adds that the lack of police intervention "lowered the risk for the right-wing perpetrators to be caught and punished."[7]

Although the role of elite allies in German Right-wing activism is difficult to ascertain, the German Cultural Community's support of the National Alternative suggests that some elites may be just as influential (and at times more influential) in a struggle when they behave in a discrete manner as when they publicly declare their allegiances. Discrete elite support may boost the morale of movement members and may simultaneously undermine the opposition, who may or may not have expected the elite allies of the former to be on their side. The veracity of that suggestion, however, will have to be determined by future research.

Although the role of elite allies in Right-wing extremism is difficult to determine from the available sources, it is clear that the climax of Right-wing extremist activity that occurred in 1991-1992 in Germany coincided with political opportunities that were primarily related to the destabilization of the established political parties and the inability and/or unwillingness of the State to endorse more repressive anti-protest tactics. The reader should note that the political opportunities that emerged during 1991-1992 did not generate a Right-wing extremist movement. Organizations such as the ANS/NA and the *Freiheitliche Deutsche Arbeiterpartei* (FAP) have existed since at least the late 1970s/early 1980s (Skrypietz, 1994:136; also see Childs, 1996:219-22; Husbands, 1991; Zimmermann and Saalfeld, 1993:62).[8] Nevertheless, the opportunities of 1991-1992 did expand the movement's pool of implicit and explicit supporters, and hence increased its mobilization potential.

Political Opportunity Structure and American Right-Wing Extremism

Information that pertains to the relationship between political opportunity structures and Right-wing extremism is much sketchier in the American context when compared to the German context. Still, I will make a preliminary attempt to link political opportunity structures with American Right-wing extremism.

In the 1980s, the appeal of race-oriented politics increased significantly among a specific segment of the American population. Between 1981 and 1987, the farm crisis in America was particularly severe (Diamond, 1995:259). During that period:

> Both the Posse Comitatus and recruiters for Lyndon LaRouche's right-wing cult made efforts to gain control over the American Agricultural Movement (AAM), a leading farmer's lobby. Conflict within AAM over whether to ally with the racist and anti-Semitic Right led to a factional split in 1982, *precisely at a time when farmers needed a coherent protest organization to make their voices heard in Washington.* . . . One AAM faction sponsored guerilla warfare training and classes on the making of pipe bombs; another faction advocating violence formed a Farmers' Liberation Army. (Diamond, 1995:260, italics added)

The Posse fed its Identity Christianity driven conspiracy theories to those who would listen, and as Sara Diamond suggests in the above quote, these theories resonated amongst a substantial proportion of the AAM. If one combines the susceptible AAM members with the 12,000-15,000 Posse members and the twelve to fifteen times as many peripheral Posse supporters the FBI estimate existed in twenty three states in 1976 (Diamond, 1995:259), then the potential for large scale movement mobilization does indeed become great. The observation that the AAM was unable to represent its constituents in a forceful manner when the latter required this representation the most is especially noteworthy. In light of the infiltration of the AAM by a racist/anti-Semitic element and the absence of explicitly racist political parties in the U.S. at the time of the farm crisis, a political opportunity appeared that enabled movements that would address the "causes" of the farm crisis (i.e., the alleged Jewish control of financial institutions) to emerge and/or grow.

In 1984, Willis Carto's Liberty Lobby sought to unite "populist" (but more accurately racist) groups and individuals under the banner of a political party he named the Populist Party (Diamond, 1995:261; also see Sargent, 1995:17-24). The party's first national chairperson was Robert Weems, "a former Mississippi Ku Klux Klan leader and head of *Spotlight*'s [the Liberty Lobby's publication] southern regional bureau" (Diamond, 1995:262-63, italics in original). Furthermore:

> Just as Klan and neo-Nazi activists had assumed leadership roles in the 1968 George Wallace campaign, the Populist Party likewise was organized by veterans of the racist Right. From the Posse Comitatus milieu came Keith Shive of the Farmers' Liberation Army and Joseph Birkenstock, the party's Wisconsin state chairperson. From the Klan came Ralph Forbes of Arkansas and A.J. Narker of North Carolina. Volunteering for the party's speaking bureau was Colonel Jack Mohr, the notoriously anti-Semitic Identity preacher and leader of the Christian Patriots Defense League. Small, pre-existing racist third parties enabled the Populist Party to achieve quick ballot status in fourteen states. (Diamond, 1995:263)

Nevertheless, the party's impact on the American political landscape was insignificant. In spite of the factionalism that crippled the party only two years after its formation (Diamond, 1995:263-64), the Populist Party unsuccessfully ran presidential candidates in 1988 and 1992 (Scheinberg, 1997:64).

The American racist Right's only "enduring" political representative is David Duke, who made his bid for power in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Duke, a "former" neo-Nazi and Grand Dragon of the Louisiana Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, sought a presidential nomination with the Populist Party in 1988, but he failed in that endeavour. In 1989 he won a seat in the Louisiana legislature as a Republican. He was unable to repeat, however, his 1989 success in the 1990 U.S. Senate race or in the 1991 Louisiana gubernatorial elections (Diamond, 1995:264-65; for more on Duke and his campaigns, see Rose [1992]). Louisiana's business elites played a key role in Duke's defeats:

> The state's business community understood the stakes when anti-racist activists threatened an international boycott against Louisiana if Duke were elected governor. Louisiana's political establishment united against Duke and took steps to ensure high turnout – particularly among black voters – to defeat him. (Diamond, 1995:265)

I suspect that explicitly racist parties would experience little success throughout the U.S. because the same factors that impeded Duke would quite probably impede their advancement as well. Although some elites may privately favour racist parties, to voice a racist position in public is likely to produce negative consequences from a business angle. While more subtle racist themes and imagery pervade mainstream political discourse (especially in the Republican Party [Diamond, 1995:265])[9], the racist Right lacks political representation that is extreme enough in its orientation to genuinely reflect its views.

As with the German extreme Right, it appears that a relatively weak far Right in the political sphere and the inability of political elites to address the concerns of Right-wing extremists is conducive to the emergence of Right-wing social movements in America. As far as the role of repression is concerned,

even though the American authorities have tried to dissuade individuals and groups from participating in campaigns of violence and they have prosecuted those who do engage in Right-wing terrorism to the full extent of the law, the general acceptance of dissenting points of view and the priority that the nation places on the First Amendment ensure that there is always at least some room for Right-wing militancy in America.

Nevertheless, at this time it is impossible to determine which of the two hypotheses one can derive from the political opportunity model is most true for the American context. Although the available evidence suggests that the second hypothesis (i.e., that Right-wing social movements are more likely to develop when "racist" parties are weak or nonexistent in the political sphere), it may very well be that in America social movements would only be encouraged to perpetrate greater amounts of violence if they were supported by relatively strong political parties (the first hypothesis). It is possible that the first hypothesis would be correct in the American context because of the extent to which racism is institutionalized there.

A Note on Political Opportunity Structures and NSM Theory

Support for the second hypothesis implies that (contemporary) social movements are dissatisfied with institutional politics. In a sense, they arise to "take matters in their own hands." I have suggested as much in the previous discussion. Thus, the assumptions of the McAdams/Koopmans version of the political opportunity model are consistent with the seventh characteristic that Hank Johnston, Enrique Laraña, and Joseph Gusfield attribute to NSMs: namely, that they are a reflection of popular discontent with institutional processes. Indeed, European sociologists have made use of the political opportunity model to perform detailed cross-national comparative analyses of Left-wing NSM emergence (e.g., Kriesi *et al.*, 1995).

One may wonder whether the political opportunity interpretation of Right-wing extremist action conflicts with the culturalist interpretation I endorsed in Chapter 2. I believe that both interpretations are compatible. Right-wing extremists make their cultural concerns heard at the institutional level when they take advantage of political opportunities (especially when the mainstream elites are destabilized and/or

when there is no one with significant political power to represent their views). Although they may hope that their actions will influence government policies, they nevertheless carry their actions out primarily in an unconventional and noninstitutional fashion in the "realm of everyday life."

The Framing Perspective

Since the mid-1980s, some RM theorists have developed ways to incorporate ideas and beliefs in RM analyses. Doug McAdam, John McCarthy, and Mayer Zald (1996:8) acknowledge that "objective" structural and political opportunities only become opportunities *when movement adherents define them as such*. David Snow and his associates (Snow, Rochford, Warden, and Benford, 1986; Snow and Benford, 1988, 1992) have elaborated on Erving Goffman's (1974) concept of "frames" in order to explain how movements construct their identities and objectives, as well as those of their members, and how they achieve movement recruitment and mobilization. David Snow and Robert Benford (1992:136-37) assert that "the concept of frame. . . refers to an interpretive schemata that simplifies and condenses the "world out there" by selectively punctuating and encoding objects, situations, events, experiences, and sequences of action within one's present or past environment. . . . they also function simultaneously as modes of attribution and articulation." By "punctuating and encoding," Snow and Benford mean that (collective action) frames help to organize an individual's interpretations of experiences and social phenomena, and accentuate the intolerable aspects of these phenomena. They then determine what type of social action should be taken and against whom this action should be taken by attributing blame for perceived wrongs to the agents the actors have decided are culpable. This process of blaming is the attribution function identified by Snow and Benford. Snow and Benford also state that frames perform their articulation function by translating and interweaving the significance of diverse and potentially ambiguous events and experiences "in a relatively unified and meaningful fashion" (1992:138).

Snow and Benford make a distinction between *collective action frames* and *master frames*. I have described the former above; they apply to the thought processes of individuals. The latter serve the same functions, but apply to social movements. According to Snow and Benford (1992):

> Master frames are generic; specific collective action frames are derivative. So conceived, master frames can be construed as functioning in a manner analogous to linguistic codes in that they provide a grammar that punctuates and syntactically connects patterns of happenings in the world. (p. 138)

Thus, master frames generate a range of responses that will influence the nature and content of more specific, experientially-shaped collective action frames. A master frame is not the same thing as "ideology," although the latter certainly influences the structure and content of the former. While an ideology is a collective's fundamental beliefs, values, and orientation to the world, a master frame is an interpretive construction of a specific issue or event which reflects the position with which the collective action frames of individual adherents should merge.

In the previous section, I mentioned how the political elites framed the *Aussiedler* situation in more or less neutral terms, while they framed the refugee question in very negative terms. Koopmans (1995b) implies that the competing political elites framed the eruptions of racist violence in ways that reflected antagonistic master frames:

> There was little room for a discussion of the causes and consequences of the influx of refugees and no solution short of a change of the constitution was ever seriously given a chance - the asylum issue had become a matter of black or white, of good or evil, SPD or CDU/CSU. For the right, as CDU general secretary Rühe put it, the issue could be summarized as 'every additional refugee is an SPD-refugee.' And for the left, every arson attack against refugees was a CDU/CSU-attack. (p. 203)

Also, Right-wing extremist groups must frame the factors I mentioned in the previous section (e.g., the opening up of political space, the destabilization of elites, an unwillingness or inability on the part of the authorities to repress collective action,...) in a manner that enables the actors in question to conceive of the coincidence of these factors in time and space as an opportunity. Likewise, Right-wing extremist scapegoating of Jews is a way in which they frame the source of their personal problems.

Unfortunately, even though an analysis of movement, media, and government frames is essential for a complete understanding of movement growth and mobilization, a detailed discussion of the framing perspective is beyond the scope of this essay. That is because the framing perspective primarily addresses the micro level (individual) factors that affect movements, while the focus of this thesis is on the role of

macro (societal) and meso level (institutional) factors in movement emergence (see Snow *et al.*, 1986; Snow and Benford, 1988, 1992, for more on the framing perspective).

Stephen Hart (1996:95) observes that although the framing perspective purports to describe culture-making strategies, the "absence of systematic and explicit attention to analytically cultural concepts" effectively reduces it to an investigation of the social psychological processes involved in movement growth and mobilization (for counter-arguments, cf. Johnston and Klandermans, 1995; Swidler, 1995; Zald, 1996). The impact of culture, whether that of a movement or that of the "dominant society," will arguably be greater on movement growth than that of frames because the latter are necessarily embedded in the former. As Rhys Williams (1995:127) puts it, "culture 'holds' (or perhaps 'molds') its social carriers even as those carriers hold and use cultural meanings" via the articulation of frames. Elsewhere, he states that "the choice among strategies [which are usually linked to frames] and the use of particular [cultural] resources are not completely at the discretion of movement actors. Choice is also shaped by availability within historically situated social contexts" (Williams, 1995:126). Furthermore, Williams (1995:125) advances the novel argument that "movement rhetoric and ideology can be thought of as 'cultural resources' and analyzed in many of the same ways as are the more conventional 'structural' resources of money, members, and organizations." Thus, the concept of "culture" can potentially act as a bridge between NSM theory and RM theory, because it is simultaneously a "structural" and "symbolic" variable. I will reserve a more in depth discussion of the relationship between culture and social movements for Chapter 4, and of the potential "cultural bridge" between NSM and RM theory in Chapter 5.

Summary and Observations

In this chapter I summarized and evaluated the main propositions of RM theory, and I discussed to a lesser extent the political process approach and the framing perspective, two theoretical orientations one frequently finds subsumed within the RM paradigm. I argued that one can apply the principles of RM theory to contemporary Right-wing extremism in the same way that one would apply them to Left-wing movements. Yet I remarked that if RM theorists modified some of the assumptions they hold about their

object of study, then the paradigm would be that much stronger. First, RM theorists should broaden their focus so that it goes beyond the analysis of formal organizations in general, and especially beyond those that are above all politically/institutionally-oriented. That change of focus would enable them to assess the degree to which their hypotheses apply to more informal, lower stratum, and primarily culture-oriented movements. From this recommendation it stems that RM researchers should likewise broaden the range of criteria they use to evaluate movement success beyond strictly material and/or political benefits.

Also, RM theory overemphasizes the instrumental and utilitarian dimensions of rationality in its interpretations of movement emergence and mobilization. RM theorists should pay more attention to value-rationality in their studies. Nevertheless, the RM suggestion that movement participants (including Right-wing extremists) are as a whole at least as "rational" as other members of society is an important contribution to social movement theory, as is the importance RM analysts attach to the structural factors that facilitate movement emergence and mobilization. Moreover, RM's conflict model of society is a definite improvement over the functionalist model its classical predecessors relied on. All of those contributions are significant for the study of formally organized and institutionally-oriented movements as well as more informal and culture-oriented movements. I noted, however, that RM criticisms concerning the role of grievances (i.e., relative deprivation and strain) are far from definitive. I will discuss the relevance of those concepts in greater detail in Chapter 4.

I argued in this chapter that the political opportunity model that McAdam proposes we adopt has stronger explanatory potential than Tilly's version of the model. The Tilly model is geared exclusively toward institutional movements, and his evolutionary view of repertoires of contention is overly simplistic and contestable on empirical grounds. The McAdam/Koopmans model is relevant to both institutional and non-institutional movements and it is empirically promising. Indeed, the framing of the German asylum policy as "problematic," the destabilization of the political elites, and the unwillingness or inability of the authorities to repress the activities of Right-wing militants, combined with the absence of a powerful far Right party, gave the German Right-wing extremist movement an unparalleled opportunity to grow and mobilize in 1991-1992. I further suggested, with caution however, that similar processes seemed to operate in the American context.

I introduced the main components of the framing perspective and briefly illustrated their importance with respect to the 1991-1992 wave of racist violence in Germany. Yet since scholars elaborated the framing perspective in order to study the micro dimensions of social movements, and because my focus is on the meso and macro factors that influence growth, I did not discuss the perspective in any significant detail. I pointed out, however, that although RM theorists use the framing perspective as a way to include symbolic and cultural elements in their research, the perspective emphasizes the social psychological mechanisms that are active in movement mobilization rather than the impact of culture *per se* on emergence and mobilization. Yet because culture is an understudied concept in the social movement literature that can potentially act as a bridge between the NSM and RM paradigms, I will devote greater attention to it in the following chapter.

Finally, RM theory, the political opportunity approach, and the framing perspective complement each other well. RM theory highlights the organizational requirements of movements; the political opportunity approach situates movements in a socio-political context; and the framing perspective explains how participants' construction of the former lead to collective action. Perhaps more importantly, the examples I cited throughout this chapter confirm the usefulness of the RM paradigm in both the American and European contexts. The salience of specific variables and propositions that are related to particular perspectives and paradigms may differ across contexts, especially with respect to the dichotomies between institutional vs. noninstitutional and political vs. cultural movements, but the overall logic of the RM paradigm is not restricted to a particular geopolitical space, as Margit Mayer ([1991] 1995:186-190) contends it is.

Chapter 4: Culture and Relative Deprivation

On several occasions in the preceding chapters, I mentioned the notion that many contemporary social movements, including Right-wing extremism, are active in the cultural sphere. Although the NSM paradigm contends that NSMs primarily are active in the cultural sphere, NSM theorists have said very little about *how* culture interacts with identity, social movements, and society in general. Furthermore, I noted that although the framing perspective in the RM paradigm purports to describe culture-making strategies, sociologists have used it primarily as a tool to analyze the social psychological processes involved in movement formation and mobilization, rather than to interpret specifically "cultural" phenomena. I must stress, however, that culture and identity are distinct objects. Culture is a *component* of identity. Yet culture has properties that extend beyond the realm of the symbolic, and these properties are highly relevant to social movement activity, and hence to movement analysis. I will explore these other properties in greater depth in this chapter.

In light of the importance that contemporary movements attach to the cultural sphere, it is essential that a macro framework specify, even if only tentatively, *how* culture plays a role in social movement emergence. I argue that the role of culture in the emergence and development of Right-wing movements is linked in many ways to the grievances and deprivations that RM analysts contend are only of secondary importance to movement emergence. I therefore summarize the strengths and weaknesses of relative deprivation theory (a classical approach to social movement emergence that was popular in the 1960s and early 1970s but which fell into disfavour following the arrival of the RM paradigm) and discuss its relevance to the development of contemporary Right-wing extremism. This thesis suggests that in the case of Right-wing extremism, scholars should view deprivation (and its interaction with culture) as a *primary* factor in movement emergence and mobilization.

The Performative View of Culture

According to Ann Swidler, who is perhaps the best known proponent of the performative perspective in cultural sociology, culture consists of *shared social practices* rather than collective mental constructions and values. She asserts that:

> [the performative approach] offers an image of culture as a "tool kit" of symbols, stories, rituals, and world-views, which people may use in varying configurations to solve different kinds of problems. Second, to analyze culture's causal effects, it focuses on "strategies of action," persistent ways of ordering action through time. Third, it sees culture's causal significance not in defining ends of action, but in providing cultural components that are used to construct strategies of action. (Swidler, 1986:273)

We are able to tell that individuals are from a different culture by their actions, even if the differences only become manifest in specific situations. The main advantage the performative view possesses over other conceptualizations of culture is that it avoids the pitfalls that one may encounter when drawing inferences about mental constructs or values that may or may not mean the same thing to diverse individuals, which is one of the weaknesses one finds in Weberian approaches to culture. Indeed, one may find that people express *similar values in different ways* across cultural contexts. Although certain cultures often foster particular values, culture and values are distinct concepts. One may perform and understand the significance of cultural practices without necessarily sharing the values or beliefs that are associated with those practices (e.g., one may practice and understand the "rituals of Socialism" without being inwardly committed to the principles of Socialism).

Swidler provides several examples that reveal the greater validity of performative analyses of culture, when compared to other modes of cultural inquiry. When discussing the "culture of poverty," for example, she writes:

> Culture in [the performative] sense is more like a style or a set of skills and habits than a set of preferences or wants. If one asked a slum youth why he did not take steps to pursue a middle-class path to success (or indeed asked oneself why one did not pursue a different life direction) the answer might well be not "I don't want that life," but instead, "Who, me?" One can hardly pursue success in a world where the accepted skills, style, and informal know-how are unfamiliar. *One does better to look for a line of action for which one already has the cultural equipment.* (Swidler, 1986:275, italics added)

Some cultural practices are more widely shared and enduring than others, and are hence widely recognizable (e.g., language). The majority, however, are localized and depend on one's social class, ethnicity, occupation, and place of residence, to list but a few of the factors that shape culture.

Swidler (1986) further argues that the performative approach can solve the dilemma that exists in Max Weber's thesis on the relationship between Calvinist doctrine and the early modern capitalist ethic:

> If we take seriously the causal model Weber offers (both in *The Protestant Ethic* and in his theoretical writings on religion), . . . we cannot understand his larger claim: that the ethos of Protestantism endured even after the spur of the Calvinist quest of proof for salvation had been lost. If ideas shape ethos, why did the ethos of ascetic Protestantism outlast its ideas?. . .
>
> How, then, should we understand continuity in the style or ethos of action, even when the ideas (and the ends of action they advocate) change? This continuity suggests that what endures is *the way action is organized*, not its ends. (p. 276, italics in original)

In other words, *beliefs eventually conform to practices*. Swidler stresses that culture consists of the repertoire of actions that are available to individuals, rather than merely the actions they put into practice. Thus, "people may have in readiness cultural practices they rarely employ; and all people know more culture than they use (if only in the sense that they ignore much that they hear)" (Swidler, 1986:277).

Swidler further insists that culture plays an especially important role in what she calls "unsettled lives," particularly via the development of new rituals (whether purely symbolic or functional). First, she states that new rituals acquire "siginificance in unsettled lives because ritual changes reorganize taken-for-granted-habits and modes of experience. People developing new strategies of action depend on cultural models to learn styles of self, relationship, cooperation, authority, and so forth." (Swidler, 1986:279). I suspect that the rituals that accompany membership in militant extremist groups indeed produce new "styles of self, relationship, cooperation, and authority." I have already alluded to that in Chapter 2.

At the very least, one should expect participation in Right-wing extremist groups to exacerbate pre-existing violent tendencies and xenophobic discourses. Indeed, many German and American Right-wing extremists participate on a regular basis in paramilitary training exercises (Abanes, 1996:20; Cox, 1992:298; Hasselbach, 1996: chap. 19; Schmidt, 1993:98-99; Skrypietz, 1994:137; Smith, 1994:64; Zimmermann and Saalfeld, 1993:57). Michael Schmidt implicitly suggests that at the time the wave of racist violence peaked in Germany in 1991-1992, neo-Nazis there attempted to legitimize the routinization of violence against foreigners in the eyes of the general public. At that time, Schmidt (1993:38) stated that

"the neo-Nazis no longer hide . . . most public appearances are carefully arranged demonstrations from which, it is hoped, followers will draw strength and inspiration." He added that "these [public demonstrations of solidarity] are the actions – when shown on television, usually together with reports on firebombings and the desecration of graves – from which the organizers expect their best propaganda success" (Schmidt, 1993:38). One young German who goes by the name of "Hackie" and who in 1992 positioned himself "between the organized neo-Nazis and the skins," stated that "he is looking for a second NSDAP [Nazi party] which he sees as "a party that's there for all of Germany" – and for a society that is German, violent, and orderly" (Ostow, 1995:100; also see Kagedan, 1997:112; Willems, 1995:171, 180).[1] Paramilitary training and public demonstrations of xenophobic violence illustrate some of the new "rituals" that the extreme Right attempts to legitimize.

James William Gibson (1994) remarks that a "New War" subculture exists in the U.S. While the "old war" mythology was military in orientation, the New War is paramilitary. Gibson claims that warrior dreams have always been a core feature of the identity of many American men. The New War mythology (which is not in and of itself racist) stresses that the American hero/warrior lives in isolation in a hostile and corrupt society, and that he (the hero/warrior is almost invariably male in this mythology) must wage a war against hidden enemies (usually the agents of the State) and "Communists." In contrast with the "old war" mythology in which the American hero/warrior battled the forces of "evil" (in the form of Indians, rustlers, corrupt cattle ranchers, and more recently oppressive political regimes that defied "the American way") in order to establish a just and stable world, those who embrace the idea of the New War are less devoted to end goals than they are to the struggle itself. Gibson (1994) writes:

> the New War has nothing at all to say about what kind of society will be created after the enemy is vanquished. The sheer intensity of violence [in New War stories that are told through *Rambo*-type movies and novels as well as gun magazines] tends to make the warrior's victories look like a definitive restoration of a fallen America. It's as if the end of gunfire must mean something good. But the defeat of chaos is not the same thing as the re-creation of a sacred order. In other words, the New War resembles those archaic creation myths that glorify the struggles that precede the establishment or restoration of social order, but not those that exalt the sacred order itself. (p. 31)

Indeed, Christian Identity (which is consistent with the ideas that characterize New War mythology) is a theology that emphasizes the violence that White American males must perpetrate during their struggle to

protect what they allege is theirs by divine decree (i.e., an exclusively White, Christian nation). While Christian Identity emphasizes the violence that is required for the present struggle between Identity Christians and their enemies, and while it identifies the people whom God has allegedly chosen to live in the sacred order, it devotes comparatively little attention to the features of the society that will emerge if Whites were victorious in their struggle. Thus, it appears to glorify the violence and the struggle that are required to establish the new social order more than the new order itself. The struggle against Jews, the State, and the "mud races" is the Identity Christian's *raison d'être*. Once again, Identity Christianity's glorification of violence represents an example of the type of ritual behaviour (i.e., unbridled aggressiveness) that many American Right-wing extremists promote.

Swidler (1986) adds:

> These explicit cultures [e.g., Right-wing extremist movements] might well be called "systems." While not perfectly consistent, they aspire to offer not multiple answers, *but one unified answer to the question of how human beings should live. In conflict with other cultural models, these cultures are coherent because they must battle to dominate the world-views, assumptions, and habits of their members.* (p. 279, italics added)

German and American Right-wing extremist groups try to promote their respective "unified answers to the question of how human beings should live." They are most definitely in conflict with other cultural models, and they constantly struggle to dominate the world-views, assumptions, and habits of their members. For example, in his book on millenarian movements in America (including Identity Christianity as well as Odinism), Jeffrey Kaplan (1997:xvi) characterizes as "striking" the "fluidity with which seekers drift from one movement to another."[2] Kaplan's observation indicates that millenarian (and Right-wing) groups must expend a considerable amount of effort to retain their members and hence to survive.

Also, Swidler (1986:279) asserts that the cultural models that social movements provide are "causally powerful, but in a restricted sense." More specifically:

> Rather than providing the underlying assumptions of an entire way of life, *they make explicit demands in contested cultural arenas*. Their independent causal influence is limited first because, at least at their origins, such ideological movements are not complete cultures, in the sense that much of their taken-for-granted understanding of the world and many of their daily practices still depend on traditional patterns. (Swidler, 1986:279, italics added)

As I have argued in considerable detail in the previous chapters, Right-wing extremist groups do in fact "make explicit demands in contested cultural arenas." Swidler's remark that ideological movements are not "complete cultures" applies to Right-wing extremist groups as well. That is to say, a substantial part of their cultural repertoire remains grounded in traditions and patterns (e.g., language) that they share with the vast majority of the population of the societies within which they exist. I will return to the theme of the continuities that exist between Right-wing extremist cultures and mainstream culture later in this chapter.

Finally, Swidler (1986) writes:

> in a period of cultural transformation, ideology forms around ethos, rather than vice versa. . . . Coherent ideologies emerge when new ways of organizing action are being developed. Such ideologies, often carried by social movements, model new ways to organize action and to structure communities. These ideological movements, however, are in active competition with other cultural frameworks – at the least in competition with common sense and usually with alternative traditions and ideologies as well. (pp. 279-80)

One can make the case that the ideology of Right-wing groups is based on their ethos, rather than the other way around. Right-wing extremists have adopted particular ideologies because they are consistent with their experiences and lifestyles (e.g., a belief in the right to bear arms among American extremists). Although the ideologies and rituals they have adopted may have slightly altered some of their attitudes and behaviours, one would find it difficult to argue that contemporary Right-wing extremists *first* created a purely ideological system, and *then* worked to ensure that there was continuity between the new system and their lifestyles (i.e., cultural repertoires).

What is especially noteworthy at this point, however, is the connection that Swidler draws between *unsettled* lives, cultural change, and social movements that are the reactive bearers of alternate cultural and ideological forms. Swidler effectively draws a parallel between relative deprivation, culture, and social movement emergence. I will dedicate the rest of this chapter to an elaboration of that connection. Yet before I do so, I must briefly discuss the main propositions of relative deprivation theory, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of that perspective.

Relative Deprivation Theory

Although the relative deprivation model that Ted Gurr (1967) developed was designed primarily to explain incidences of civil violence, the collective response alternatives in their path diagram include nonviolent protest (among other things) as well as variants of civil violence, which therefore makes the model implicitly applicable to social movements in general. According to Gurr, all collective response alternatives are a direct result of discontent/anger/rage, which are in turn due to relative deprivation. Gurr (1967:3) defines relative deprivation as "actors' perception of discrepancy between their value expectations and their environment's value capabilities." He specifies:

> Value expectations are the goods and conditions of life to which people believe they are justifiably entitled. The referents of value capabilities are to be found largely in the social and physical environment: they are conditions that determine peoples' chances for getting or keeping the values they legitimately expect to attain. (Gurr, 1967:3)

Gurr contends that relative deprivation manifests itself in a number of ways. It may manifest itself "through changes in expectation levels alone, by comparison with one's own past condition, by abrupt political or economic change, and so forth" (Gurr with Ruttenberg, 1967:4).[3] Thus, the basic principles of relative deprivation are similar to those of competition-based theories of racist violence (see Chapter 1).

Gurr adopts a threefold categorization of values that includes welfare values, power values, and interpersonal values. *Welfare values* pertain to the necessities of life (e.g., access to food, shelter, health services, and physical comforts), as well as to "the development and use of physical and mental abilities" (Gurr, 1970:25). Gurr subdivides welfare values into *economic values* (the former) *and self-actualization values* (the latter). Gurr (1970:25) defines *power values* as "those that determine the extent to which [individuals] can influence the actions of others and avoid unwanted interference by others in their own actions." As with welfare values, he distinguishes between two types of power values: participation values and security values. *Participation values* refer to "the desire to participate in collective decision-making – to vote, to take part in political competition, to become a member of the political elite" (Gurr, 1970:25-26). *Security values* refer to "desires for self-determination and security, for example freedom from oppressive political regulation or from disorder" (Gurr, 1970:26).

Gurr (1970:26) defines *interpersonal values* as "the psychological satisfactions we seek in nonauthoritative interactions with other individuals and groups."[4] More specifically:

> These values include the desire for status, i.e., occupancy of a generally recognized role by virtue of which we are granted some measure of prestige by those with whom we interact; the related need to participate in stable, supportive groups – family, community associations – that provide companionship and affection; and the sense of certainty that derives from shared adherence to beliefs about the nature of society and one's place in it, and to norms governing social interaction. These three classes of interpersonal values are labeled *status, communality, and ideational coherence* (Gurr, 1970:26, italics in original).

Thus, the inability to meet one or several of the value expectations listed above, when a collectivity believes that the attainment of these values is legitimate and should be realistically possible, creates feelings of relative deprivation in that collectivity. It makes sense to argue that relative deprivation could form the basis for social movement formation (i.e., a response that is not unequivocally violent or spontaneous) as well as civil violence. That argument is especially plausible in the case of Right-wing extremism, which is a movement that has a certain measure of formal and enduring organization (i.e., it is not entirely spontaneous nor necessarily short-lived), and which *on occasion* engages in small scale bursts of civil violence.

Relative Deprivation Theory and Right-Wing Extremism

Resource mobilization theorists claim "that there is little or no relationship between variations in relative deprivation and the pace and timing of collective protest" (Piven and Cloward, 1992:142). They claim that grievances and dissent are relatively permanent and recurring features of society, and that they exist independently of economic cycles. Concerning the application of relative deprivation theory to the mobilization of Christian Identity adherents in the U.S., Jeffrey Kaplan (1993) states:

> the turn to violence by a few adherents came in the mid to late 1970s, following years of violent rhetoric emanating largely from the California group around William Potter Gale and Wesley Swift [Identity pastors], which was later taken to Idaho with Richard Butler and his acolytes. Why were these calls suddenly heeded by a few (and ignored by many)? The economy was comparatively robust -- there is no indication in movement literature that Identity adherents felt themselves to be losing ground *vis-à-vis* other Americans, suggesting that relative deprivation theories are of limited use for Identity adherents. (p. 48, italics in original)

Yet this criticism may not be valid, either theoretically or empirically. Anthony Oberschall (1973), citing work by Mancur Olson, Jr., writes:

> nothing in economic theory contradicts the possibility of an increase in the number of economic losers during a period of economic growth and that such growth might be associated with changes in the relative economic position of social strata and other population groups.... [D]etailed information on the impact of economic changes upon specific groups is needed for understanding the potential for social and political unrest in these groups. Knowledge of aggregate national economic trends alone, or comparative analyses of countries based on aggregate figures, can lead to misleading inferences. (p. 38)

Thus, Kaplan makes two potentially erroneous claims in his statement. The first is his assertion that the American economy was comparatively robust during the 1970s. Chip Berlet (1995:284, italics added) states that the "Posse Comitatus . . . spread racism throughout the farm belt during the *rural economic crises* in the late 1970s." According to Leonard Weinberg (1997:248-49), Klan, Posse Comitatus, and Identity groups are primarily located in small towns in the American South, Midwest, and West. Many members are therefore likely to come from rural communities where the effects of the farm crisis were particularly severe (see Corcoran,1990; Young, 1990).

Although Berlet's observation does not solve the problem associated with aggregate data, his information is more specific in scope and already reveals the kinds of flaws in aggregate data that Oberschall cautions researchers about, and that are evident in Kaplan's analysis. The second potentially erroneous claim Kaplan makes is that since their socio-economic conditions were allegedly no worse than those of other Americans, then relative deprivation could not be the source of motivation for Identity Christians. As we have seen in Gurr and Ruttenberg's formulation of the concept, relative deprivation also may emerge from comparisons with one's past situation. Furthermore, relative deprivation does not manifest itself in strictly economic terms. Also, in Chapter 5 I will suggest a reason for why the "few" heeded the call for violence that certain Identity pastors advocated, while the "many" did not.

In Chapters 2 and 3 I discussed the misfortunes that befell American farmers in the late 1970s and the 1980s and which opened a window of opportunity for extreme Right groups to develop in the farm belt. The following quote reveals the extent to which relative deprivation might have been a factor in farmer discontent and the growth of contemporary Right-wing extremism in America:

> In the 1970s, farmers were encouraged to expand their businesses. Then inflation drove interest rates up. Those farmers who could still pay their loans saw their land prices plummet between 1981 and 1987, while they read about Wall Street speculators becoming millionaires through insider trading and other crafty means of moving numbers on paper. The magnitude of the farm crisis was staggering. In Minnesota, the average price of an acre of land fell from $1,947 in 1981 to $628 in 1987, amounting to a loss of paper wealth of between $20 and $40 billion for that state alone. The U.S. farm population dropped from nine million in 1975 to less than five million in 1987, as absentee investors assumed an even greater percentage of farm ownership. In Iowa, an estimated 30 percent of the farmers were threatened with the loss of their land.
>
> Individual farmers saw everything they had worked for fall into the hands of bankers who foreclosed on their property. In that context, the racist Right took advantage of a rare opportunity to spread their spurious conspiracy theories about Jewish control of the financial system. (Diamond, 1995:259)

Many American farmers hence saw their conditions deteriorate in comparison with both their past situation and with that of other Americans (e.g., bankers). Between 1978 and 1987, the real income of bankers and others employed in the securities industry in the U.S. increased by 21 percent, "while the number of Americans who were employed but whose incomes fell below the poverty line rose by 23 percent" (Weinberg, 1993a:202). Leonard Weinberg (1993a:202) notes that those in "routine production services" (e.g., farming and manufacturing) and "routine personal services" (e.g., truck drivers, restaurant employees,...) were among those that were hit the hardest by the changing economy.

Stephen Scheinberg (1997) notes that currently Jews have significant representation in high profile and high income jobs:

> [they constitute] half of all billionaires and a substantial portion of the faculty in elite universities. Ten members of the U.S. Senate and thirty-two members of the House are Jews; three major networks have Jewish CEOs, and Jews are prominent in the Clinton White House circle (Robert Reich, Mickey Kantor, Ira Magaziner, and others). (p. 56)

In light of the visible success American Jews are experiencing, it is easy to see how anti-Semitic conspiracy theories could gain credence among the dispossessed in American society.

Of course, not all American extremists are farmers who have lost their land, nor have their respective conditions necessarily deteriorated economically *vis-à-vis* the situation of other Americans or that of their own past. Nevertheless, all American extremists *feel* dispossessed:

> Indeed, to the extent that there is a single overarching theme to their outlook, it is the sense that America has new owners: What was once theirs now belongs to someone else. If their social backgrounds do not tell all, they tell some things. They are whites in an era when major American cities have growing and highly visible black, Hispanic, and Asian populations. They are men at a time when women's issues have gained substantial public attention. They are

> largely Protestant during a period when Catholics and Jews have risen to positions of prominence in almost all walks of life. They live on the periphery (e.g., Idaho) when the center makes basic decisions (e.g., taxes) that affect their lives. The sense of loss, of dispossession, is palpable. (Weinberg, 1993a:193)

Thus, the evidence indicates that widespread relative deprivation is a salient determinant of Right-wing extremist activity.

A considerable amount of evidence exists which suggests that relative deprivation is an equally important factor behind the development of contemporary German Right-wing extremism. Thomas Hueglin (1997) observes:

> An entire quintile of German society (east and west) may now be living near or below the poverty line, and what counts here is not so much the absolute line of where poverty begins or ends, but instead the tremendous relative differential between rich and poor in one of the wealthiest countries in the world. The trend is being reinforced by policies of social security reduction, and by the parallel privatization of insurance for those who can afford it. Disparities within each of the two parts of the new Germany as well as across them have little chance of being balanced out in the foreseeable future. (p. 146; also see Minkenberg, 1994:170).

In contrast with Hueglin, Ruud Koopmans declares that the grievance/relative deprivation model is of limited use for explaining the recent occurrence of racist violence in European countries.

Koopmans (1995b:196-97) argues that grievance models that seek to explain why racist violence occurs on a greater scale at specific times and places "would look for such an explanation in the actual (objective and subjective) extent of the 'foreigner problem.'" He hypothesizes that "where the proportion of foreigners or the influx of asylum seekers is larger, and where a larger share of the population perceives these facts as problematic [e.g., due to the strain the new arrivals allegedly place on the economy and the job market] we may expect racist violence to be more intense than [where] no such conditions prevail" (Koopmans, 1995b:196). Koopmans's data provide contradictory results about the influence that grievances have on racist violence. More specifically:

> West Germany and the Netherlands can still be interpreted in terms of the grievance model. West Germany has a large foreign population and a high influx of refugees, xenophobic attitudes are relatively widespread, and the level of extreme right violence is high, while in the Netherlands more or less the opposite is true. East Germany, however, has an extremely high level of racist violence directed against a tiny population of foreigners and refugees despite a low level of xenophobia at the attitudinal level. France is objectively moderately affected by the foreigner and refugee 'problems', has high levels of xenophobia, but little violence. And in Denmark a small objective extent of the 'problem' combines with widespread xenophobic attitudes, but again almost no violence. (Koopmans, 1995b:200)

Koopmans therefore concludes that the grievance model provides at best a partial explanation for the proliferation of racist violence in Europe. I agree wholeheartedly with his conclusion. Nevertheless, Koopmans may have overlooked a logical explanation for the discrepancy between the levels of violence and the number of foreigners that one finds in the East German context.

According to Manfred Kuechler (1994):

> with few foreigners living in the eastern part of Germany, guest workers do not constitute actual competition on local job markets. The rationale, then, may be more complex; for example, if there were fewer guest workers in Western Germany, employers there would face a labour shortage, and consequently would be more likely to shift jobs to eastern Germany. (p.58)

In light of the circumstances in which many East Germans find themselves today, I believe that Kuechler's interpretation indeed is plausible. Unemployment among East Germans is significantly worse than it is among West Germans. Official statistics for 1995 indicated that 8.5% of West Germans and 14.2% of East Germans were unemployed, and economic projections suggest that these trends will continue in the foreseeable future (Lauk, 1996:97; also see Hueglin, 1997:146). Unemployment is particularly acute among East German women: "prior to July 1990, 90 per cent of all East German women aged 15-60 engaged in gainful employment or paid apprenticeships; they now comprise 68 per cent of the region's long-term unemployed" (Mushaben, 1996:249). Considering those statistics, it is ironic (though understandable [see Chapter 2]) that few German women should actively participate in Right-wing movements. Hueglin (1997:147) states that the potential for Right-wing voting (and, I would add, for Right-wing militant participation) is highest among "skilled and unionized workers/employees in the west who feel threatened in their relative position of security by a rapidly growing reserve army of labour; and east German youth who feel frustrated in their relative insecurity by the growing inaccessibility of meaningful and well paying jobs" (also see Willems, 1995:174-75).[5]

Limited interview data provide initial confirmation for the position that Right-wing participation is at least in part a product of relative deprivation. Consider the following reconstruction of the life of "Hanna," an East German neo-Nazi skinhead:

> Until 1989, her family had been, in her own words, "just the way those on top wished a family to be." Her father was an auto worker, her mother was employed in the factory kindergarten.

> Both parents had low level posts with the SED [Socialist Unity Party], and Hanna herself was considered a model student by her teachers. Three years after the collapse of the GDR, Hanna's father was unemployed, and her mother was working as a cleaning lady for the local CDU [Christian Democratic Union] member of parliament. Hanna still attended school, but whether she would be awarded an *Abitur* [pre-university degree] in two years as had been expected, or whether she would get one at all, had become uncertain. (Ostow, 1995:91, italics in original)

Wessis (West Germans) are the true target of Hanna's anger, but she vents her frustration by attacking Vietnamese people, who are more vulnerable targets. Furthermore, the Vietnamese represent "her rivals for the meager social resources locally available" (Ostow, 1995:96). Hanna herself remarks that:

> I went through everything there was in the GDR. Daycare, youth organization, Young Pioneers, Free German Youth (the national youth organization). What you saw as the great lack of freedom – the regime of terror you freed us from – it was at least something and not the total nothing that we then got. (quoted in Ostow, 1995:91-92)

Thus, many Germans (and especially East Germans) are experiencing conditions that are inferior to the ones they were formerly accustomed to and that are inferior when compared to those of more affluent Germans (also see Husbands, 1991:111). One can therefore argue that relative deprivation drives some individuals to participate in Right-wing movements in an attempt to redress their respective situations.

The above discussion sheds light on some of the demographic peculiarities of American and German Right-wing extremist groups. The average age of American extremists (see Chapter 2) is higher than that of German extremists due to their respective occupational backgrounds. Although all American activists do not come from agricultural backgrounds, many do. Farming tends to be a family venture that is handed down from generation to generation. It generally requires a long-term commitment that is highly dependent on the experience one gains through the vocation over time. Thus, those who have invested the most in farming, and who are therefore more attached to the agricultural lifestyle and are hence likely to feel most aggrieved by the loss of their livelihood, would logically be later in their adult years.

In Germany, though East Germans of all ages have experienced high levels of relative deprivation, the promises and golden opportunities that failed to materialize for East Germans following reunification must have been particularly disheartening for the more idealistic youth (also see Childs, 1996:226). Also, it is common criminological knowledge that youths are more likely to engage in socially risky behaviour (e.g., violent activism) than adults. Youths have a lower stake in conformity because they

tend to have fewer and weaker bonds that tie them to the expectations of mainstream society than do older adults, and participation in risky endeavours therefore is potentially more dangerous for the latter than for the former. The greater risks that older individuals associate with violent activism thus inhibit many adults from taking part in that type of action. One may then wonder why the average age of American extremists is so high, if older age supposedly corresponds with a lower inclination toward violent activism. This discrepancy between German and American Right-wing activism is due to the existence in America of a New War mythology that manifests itself subculturally as well as nationally and which is conducive to violent, dissenting behaviour. That climate transcends the boundaries of age. Moreover, the American political culture has traditionally fostered ideological pluralism and hence a tolerance of dissenting views. Due to the German State's intolerance (and active repression) of anti-constitutional activity, no such climate or mythology has had the opportunity to develop at the national level in that country in the post-War period.

Although I have primarily addressed deprivation that is related to economic values in this section, one can also link Right-wing extremism to deprivations in participation and security values, as well as in ideational coherence. I have discussed implicitly the link between deprivation that is tied to participation values and Right-wing extremism in Chapter 3, while addressing the concept of the political opportunity structure. The link between deprivation that is tied to security values and Right-wing extremism is particularly visible in the American context. Right-wing extremists in the U.S. perceive the federal government's taxation powers and attempts to legislate gun ownership as oppressive political regulations. The search for ideational coherence also is most evident among American extremists. Identity Christians in particular see a huge gulf between their morals and values and those of the society in which they live (see Barkun, 1989, 1994; Kaplan, 1993, 1997).

Criticisms of Relative Deprivation Theory

Critics have attributed a number of weaknesses to relative deprivation theory. First, critics often charge that relative deprivation theory often explains social movement activity in terms of "irrational" behaviour (Mayer, 1991:60). Yet this criticism is not entirely appropriate for Gurr's formulation of the

theory. First, even though I am making use of Gurr's main theoretical propositions to account for the emergence of Right-wing extremist movements, Gurr himself was primarily trying to account for the factors that contribute to eruptions of civil violence. Although some social movements may indeed engage in civil violence, the former and the latter are far from the same thing. Furthermore, Gurr (1970:45-46) states that his model gives *equal weight* to the *instrumentalities* (i.e., rational uses) and *nonrational origins* and manifestations of strife.

Second, relative deprivation theory restricts its focus to noninstitutional collective action. That focus, of course, is the converse of the focus the RM paradigm places on organized/institutional action. Yet grievances plausibly can lead to institutional as well as noninstitutional action. The issue is merely one of broadening the focus of the relative deprivation model so that one may extend it to institutional action whenever necessary.

Third, the classical perspectives, including Gurr's theory, confuse their levels of analysis:

> classical theorists have [focused] particularly on the *micro* level of social psychological analysis: while the collective behavior approach would emphasize the role of emergent norms and values in the generation of social movements, and the mass society approach would stress feelings of "alienation and anxiety" engendered by "social atomization," and while relative deprivation theory took its name from the psychological state thought to trigger protest, they all explained the origins of social movements by reference to the same dynamics that accounted for individual participation in movement activities. Hence, answers to micro questions of individual participation *and* answers to macro questions of movement emergence are sought in the characteristic psychological profile of the participant and the presumed psychological functions associated with participation. (Mayer, 1991:60, italics in original)

In their critique of relative deprivation theory, Joan Neff Gurney and Kathleen Tierney (1982:35) argue that relative deprivation is "an intervening variable which explains the relationship between structural conditions and resultant social movement activity." They add that "writers using the frustration-aggression framework might be expected to relate individual psychological tension to movement activity; yet researchers such as Gurr do not do so but instead infer RD [relative deprivation] from economic and political indicators" (Gurney and Tierney, 1982:39). Although Gurney and Tierney (1982:38) agree that macro factors *may* correspond with individual perceptions of deprivation, their main point is that researchers have not confirmed those inferences with research. This thesis makes the same "mistake" that RD theorists make (i.e., it infers individual perceptions from macro factors). The reader should note,

however, that this thesis is primarily a theoretical exercise, which one could nevertheless verify empirically given studies that would investigate the relationship between macro trends, individual perceptions, and social movement activity/emergence.

Fourth, as I have already mentioned in Chapter 3, RM theorists argue that there is little or no relationship between variations in relative deprivation and the pace and timing of collective protest. Also in Chapter 3, I noted that there are flaws in the evidence upon which that conclusion is based. James Aho (1990:216-18) correlated unemployment rates and occurrences of Right-wing extremism in the U.S. from 1795 to the 1980s and found that there is little relationship between the two. Yet as I have already noted, relative deprivation does not just manifest itself in economic terms. Moreover, and Aho himself acknowledges this, correlating unemployment rates with incidences of Right-wing extremism provides a *very limited test* of the relationship between status displacement and Right-wing extremism. Finally, Aho's research does not circumvent the problems that are associated with the use of aggregate economic data in the analysis of specific collectivities or societal segments, which I discussed earlier in this chapter.

In a similar vein, Gurney and Tierney (1982:38; also see Tilly, 1975:12) observe that RD theorists fail to investigate instances where a collectivity experiences deprivation but fails to mobilize. The above criticisms do not invalidate relative deprivation theory. Rather, they reveal areas where further research is required to support either the theory itself or the objections that critics have raised.

One area where research is especially required pertains to the intensity and scope of deprivation. Gurr (1970: chap. 3) has theorized about the effects the intensity and scope of deprivation have on collective action. Yet to my knowledge, little research (if any) has tested propositions that pertain to the scope and intensity of deprivation (see Gurney and Tierney, 1982:42).[6] The resolution of that problem may explain under what circumstances grievances lead to collective action, which might in turn silence critics of RD theory and reestablish the salience of grievances in social movement emergence in general (and of Right-wing extremism in particular). Also, RM theorists neglect the possibility that relative deprivation may have a different impact on institutional and noninstitutional movements. Thus, relative deprivation theory may still make worthwhile contributions to social movement research.

At this point, however, we face the dilemma of how to reconcile the psychological dimension of relative deprivation with an objectivist macro-theoretical framework, which is what this thesis intends to accomplish. Koopmans (1995b:195) asserts that "the 'grievance model' focuses on objective conditions which are presumed to lead to subjective grievances or discontent, which in turn lead people to participate in social movements." Previously, I discussed how one can link the relationship between unemployment and the influx of foreigners in Germany to an expansion in Right-wing extremism there, and how one can link the relationship between the agricultural crisis and the plight of U.S. farmers to contemporary Right-wing extremism in America. Those relationships are all objective relationships.

Admittedly, constructivism and social psychology (subjectivist orientations) ultimately prevail because we must rely on those perspectives to understand how social actors construct objective phenomena and how they construct the options that they can follow as a response to these objective phenomena. Nevertheless, *the bottom line remains that large scale objective phenomena have an impact on subjective perceptions*. Furthermore, an *objectively verifiable aggregate* of individuals who experience these phenomena and construct them (and their relationships/responses to them) in a particular way exists (see Gurr, 1970:25). Thus, relative deprivation is measurable at the macro level. Likewise, although actors have to construct a political opportunity, once they have constructed or framed an event as an opportunity, that opportunity becomes a macro phenomenon that researchers can compare with other objectively measurable (if subjectively determined) variables.

The Relationship Between Culture and Relative Deprivation

The American Context

The macro factors that influence perceptions of relative deprivation effectively challenge the cultural practices of certain segments of society. Right-wing extremism is a particular type of social movement that is likely to arise in order to defend the cultural practices that certain social groups perceive are being threatened by large scale societal currents. For example, different cultural practices arguably prevail in the American farm belt when compared to urban centres. Furthermore, within urban locales,

one's position in the societal hierarchy partially determines the cultural repertoire one will have access to, as my summary of Swidler's discussion of the "culture of poverty" suggests. Farmers arguably engage in different rituals, have different world-views, and they possess skills and "know-how" that are sometimes unique to their position in society. Dramatic social changes that threaten established cultural patterns and lifestyles produce reactive movements that seek either to defend existing practices, or to assert new practices that nevertheless are consistent with the previous experiences of movement participants. Swidler (1986:277) argues that "styles or strategies of action [are] more persistent than the ends people seek to attain. Indeed, people will come to value ends for which their cultural equipment is well suited." Deprivation does not affect values as much as it does practices (i.e., one's values do not necessarily change because one is in dire straits). Thus, Right-wing extremism is a response to the social currents that threaten the "familiar" or "routine" aspects of the lifestyles of certain groups. One can state the relationship between culture and identity as "doing is being."

Gibson (1994) argues persuasively that the New War subculture in the U.S. emerged in part as a reaction to America's defeat in the Vietnam War. The "warriors" who participate in the New War include (but are not restricted to) members of the racist Right. Earlier in this chapter, I explained why anti-Semitic conspiracy theories have had a considerable degree of appeal among disgruntled farmers. Yet other factors also have contributed to the growth of racist sentiments in disgruntled farmers as well as across most segments of White American society. Gibson (1994) argues:

> in the late 1970s and 1980s the men on the burgeoning racist right were reacting to the same American historical and cultural crises as those men whom *SOF* [*Soldier of Fortune*, a paramilitary magazine that is available on newsstands and which has a wide circulation] saw as legitimate [anti-Communists and mercenaries, but not racists] – the defeat in Vietnam, and what many people perceived as the collapse of the U.S. political, military, and economic power both at home and abroad. What the racist right did was simply stress that "non-whites," including Jews, were virtually the same as "Communists": the fight against Communism was also a fight for white supremacy. From this perspective, the defeat in Vietnam was also a fight for white supremacy. The vast superiority of "white" Americans' war technology to what the "yellow" Asians had been using only made the defeat more mysterious and threatening. Events such as the 1971 conviction of U.S. Army Lieutenant William Calley for the murder of over 400 Vietnamese civilians at My Lai indicated to many white men that what they understood to be the fundamental and just American order was being destroyed – Calley had simply been doing his job. Undoubtedly many leaders of the far right were racists before the Vietnam War – the Ku Klux Klan, for example, dates back to the post-Civil War era – but defeat pushed their thinking to new extremes. There had to be a reason why the white man's world was in decline. (p. 214)

America's defeat at the end of the Vietnam War is relevant because it created a crisis of self-image (i.e., ideational coherence) in American culture. The country that had never lost a war experienced its first defeat. America could no longer maintain its political dominance with the threat of military intervention, because the international community was aware that a significant proportion of the American public would cease to support such initiatives in the wake of the Vietnam War. The self-image of many Americans was until then very much in tune with the image their political, economic, and military order projects of their nation. "The result was a massive disjunction in American culture, a crisis of self-image: If Americans were no longer winners, who were they?" (Gibson, 1994:10).

Elsewhere, Gibson (1994) writes:

> Extraordinary economic changes also marked the 1970s and 1980s. U.S. manufacturing strength declined substantially; staggering trade deficits with other countries and the chronic federal budget deficits shifted the United States from creditor to debtor nation. The post-World War II American dream – which promised a combination of technological progress and social reforms, together with high employment rates, rising wages, widespread home ownership, and ever increasing consumer options – no longer seemed a likely prospect for the great majority. At the same time, the rise in crime rates, particularly because of drug abuse and its accompanying violence, made people feel more powerless than ever. (p. 11)

Many Americans hence lost faith in their government. Gibson (1994:11) adds that immigration trends and the domestic success of civil rights, ethnic pride, and feminist movements compounded the sense of loss (i.e., deprivation) that White American males began to experience in the post-Vietnam era. The perception that the social changes I have mentioned above threatened to alter (and in some cases actually did alter) the everyday practices and patterns of interaction that many White American males had until then taken for granted took hold among a significant proportion of them.

In the unsettled times of post-Vietnam America, some groups and individuals find it necessary to articulate new cosmogonic myths and rituals in order to reassert what they consider are essential components of a White American male identity and lifestyle. As I noted in Chapter 2, most American Right-wing extremists adhere to one of two cosmogonic myths: some adhere to Identity Christianity, while others adhere to the doctrines that appear in William Pierce's *The Turner Diairies*, which provide the theological foundations for his neo-Nazi "Cosmotheist Church" (Gibson, 1994:214). Earlier in this chapter I alluded to the idea that participation in paramilitary exercises reflects one of the new ritual practices in

which Right-wing extremists participate. These paramilitary exercises are consistent with the "military culture" background out of which came several prominent American extremists (all of the extremists with military backgrounds that Gibson [1994:215-16] cites served in the Vietnam War; Timothy McVeigh served in Desert Storm).

Although I may be reaching, ritual practices which involve weapons may also represent *a broad extension* of the agricultural lifestyle. Farmers often own guns, if only to protect their stock from predators. Thus, farmers may perceive government proposals to restrict firearms ownership as a threat to their specific culture and lifestyle, to which some in turn respond by engaging in paramilitary exercises in order to prepare for an allegedly impending confrontation with the authorities. When one combines the threat of restricted gun ownership with the extent to which many American farmers (and other members of the militant Right-wing movement) have experienced economic deprivation, it is easy to see why farmers might fear the obsolescence of their culture and why they should defend it so vigorously. The occupational skills (i.e., cultural practices) they possess have little use in the other areas of the late capitalist economy. Were they to lose the livelihood to which their skills are suited, then they probably would face overwhelming social and economic marginalization. That is especially true for those who are unable or unwilling to adapt to the technological exigencies of the post-industrial labour market. Finally, the rituals that are associated with the New War mythology represent a way for alienated White males to reassert a particular masculine identity that is based on *action* (Gibson, 1994:11).[7] To reiterate a point I made earlier, one's ritual practices play an important role in the determination of one's identity.

The German Context

One can make similar inferences about the relationship between culture, relative deprivation, and Right-wing extremism by studying the interaction of these concepts in the German context. German reunification in particular has placed the inhabitants of the former GDR in a cultural void. The process of adaptation to a new economy, political system, and norms of social interaction, coupled with the fact that many of their socio-economic expectations of reunification failed to materialize, induced feelings of relative deprivation in a large segment of East Germans. Mainstream pre-unification East German culture

contained a number of features that are now conducive to Right-wing extremist thought and action among those who experience relative deprivation and cultural dislocation.

Although the East German State officially claimed to have eradicated fascism within its borders during the post-World War II era, vestiges of fascist and Nazi discourses nevertheless endured in the GDR. In both East and West, Nazi ideas were and are still transmitted to young men by their grandfathers who experienced (and in this case approved of) Hitler's Germany (M. Behrend, 1995:200-01). Of the West German context, Lena Inowlocki (1985) comments:

> History as taught in school usually [focuses] on the Nazi 'times of terror', with the atrocities committed in the name of the German people, and how they followed obediently out of fear. Some students find a conflict between this approach to the national past, and what they have heard at home: stories from the older generation of the family of good times in Nazi youth organisations in the pre-war years, and of tough and heroic soldiering in the Second World War. (p. 7)

Swidler notes that the transmission of stories is an important vehicle for the elaboration of new cultural forms. Inowlocki (1985:8) states that most of her neo-Nazi informants mentioned the presence of an older storyteller in their lives.

GDR state and educational policy have also contributed to the greater level of sympathy toward Right-wing extremism immediately after unification among East Germans when compared to West Germans. The GDR's state policy and educational curriculum discouraged critical thought and independent decision making. The GDR's SED (Socialist Unity Party) regime proclaimed the East German State and people as the incontrovertible "'victors of history' – a group of people who no longer had any need to grapple with the [N]azi legacy" (M. Behrend, 1995:201). The GDR's initial post-War combative antifascist culture degenerated into hollow ritual. According to Manfred Behrend (1995):

> The result was a widespread lack of knowledge of and insight into fascism and political reaction. There was little ability to judge and act when confronted with that prettified image of German national socialism conveyed by the West German media and neonazis [sic] as well as by some older people. Revanchism, xenophobia and racism encountered low levels of political and ideological resistance and immunity within broad sections of the population. (p. 201; also see Verbeeck, 1996)

In addition to its narrow and non-critical educational curriculum, the GDR promoted a rigid, authoritative culture and "soldierly virtues" (M. Behrend, 1995:202). In West Germany, the trend pertaining to

education about the Third Reich is the reverse of that which characterized East Germany. West German students remained relatively ignorant of the Nazi past until the 1960s. "Until the late sixties the Nazi period had not been on the curriculum at all, and even after that many history teachers had preferred not to touch it" (Inowlocki, 1985:7).

In spite of its alleged commitment to egalitarian and socialist principles, the SED government practiced ethnic segregation within the borders of the GDR:

> At the end of the GDR's existence, there were about 191,000 foreigners living in East Germany (1.2 per cent of the entire population), most of whom were contract workers and students form 'socialist brother countries' such as Vietnam, Mozambique, Cuba, Poland and others. Despite the official rhetoric of socialist internationalism and brotherhood, there was complete segregation of East Germans and all foreigners, including 400,000 Red Army soldiers and their families. The lack of real experience of and contact with these foreigners was compensated by stereotypes and reinforced by the official treatment of foreigners as second-class residents. . . . [X]enophobia became respectable in East German homes and neighbourhoods. (Minkenberg, 1994:183)

Minkenberg (1994:183, italics in original) adds that "overall, despite the *quantité négligeable* of foreigners in the GDR, racism, as well as an 'anti-Semitism without Jews', were composite elements of an authoritarian culture that prohibited an open and self-educating discourse on those matters." Furthermore, organized Right-wing activity has existed in the GDR as early as the 1970s (M. Behrend, 1995:203-05; Kagedan, 1997:111).

When one considers the above elements of East German culture in light of the cultural and economic crises many East Germans faced immediately after unification, it is easy to understand how the authoritarian and racist orientation of Right-wing extremism might appeal to alienated easterners.[8] Right-wing extremism is in certain ways the ensemble of cultural practices and discourses that is most proximate to the socialist system with which East Germans were familiar. Ian Kagedan (1997:112) declares that "the skinhead movement provided an alternative that was especially attractive to those who, as products of a totalitarian socialist upbringing, had a decidedly authoritarian inclination." That quote says more about the patterns of interaction with which skinhead youth are comfortable and familiar than it does about their beliefs and values. It is clear that a part of the East German cultural repertoire is unsuited for the West German culture and economy. It is the difficulty with the rituals and patterns of interaction of West Germany which in turn limits the opportunities that are available to East Germans, rather than an

unwillingness to adopt new values, that frustrates East Germans. After all, many people from the former East Bloc (including East Germany) initially looked forward to the substitution of socialism with a market economy. Moreover, those East Germans that are dissatisfied with the new capitalist and democratic systems are not necessarily opposed to the system *per se*. Rather, they may be frustrated because they are currently the "losers" under the new system.

In both East and West, Right-wing extremism is most popular among those disgruntled individuals and social groups who also have not been adequately educated about the movement's historical predecessor. Although the extreme Right's hypernationalist discourse appeals equally to alienated East Germans as well as West Germans, this discourse (rather than the actual behavioural patterns the Right promotes) is probably the feature with which Westerners identify the most because their post-War culture was not quite as authoritarian as that of their Eastern cousins.

It is worth noting that all of the value frustrations that Gurr contends lead to feelings of deprivation have potential (if not actual) cultural consequences. Deprivation that is due to the frustration of economic, security, and/or ideational values has an implicit, if not explicit, impact on one's ritual practices. Even deprivation in participation values has cultural consequences. After all, one of the roles of institutional politics is to legislate what constitutes acceptable social practices and what does not. Thus, legislation legitimates certain practices and proscribes others. Those who persist in their practice of proscribed rituals may find themselves in conflict with the State, which may lead the former either to reassert their practices or to conform with the demands of the State. Failure to adapt to dominant cultural modes or to convince the authorities of the legitimacy of one's own cultural practices will likely lead to social and/or economic marginalization. Because the State does not have access to one's thoughts, what one thinks is of lesser concern to the authorities than what one does. Relative deprivation in general therefore occurs when one's cultural practices and hence identity (rather than values *per se*) are at stake.

After taking into account the extent to which I allege specific segments of the German and American populations have experienced relative deprivation, one may wonder why *so few* individuals actually participate in militant Right-wing activity. I will address that question in Chapter 5.

The Continuity Between Mainstream Culture and Right-Wing Extremist Cultures

Militant Right-wing social movements do not stand in total opposition to the dominant cultures of the societies out of which they have emerged. At the very least, they rely on the language that is shared by virtually all members of their societies to diffuse their messages, as well as popular symbols and discourses. For example, German neo-Nazis make use of the slogan "Germany for the Germans" in order to appeal to the notion that is widespread among Germans that ethnicity is determined by the blood-line. Moreover, Kagedan (1997:128) asserts that "the fondness for authority and the conformist elitism that have been part of German culture, whether in its more formal and extreme expressions or in its more subtle, democratized expressions, contributes to a climate conducive to an expansion of xenophobic feeling." Nevertheless, although there appeared to be alarmingly high levels of xenophobic sentiment throughout Germany immediately following reunification, as early as 1992 a majority of Germans listed Right-wing extremists as the most undesirable neighbours. The general public found Right-wing extremists more undesirable than people of ethnic minority backgrounds, Left-wing extremists, alcoholics, and even drug addicts (Kagedan, 1997:120-21, 131).

Identity Christians invoke Christian symbolism in order to promote the righteousness of their cause, and hence to increase their appeal to the White contingent of a highly religious country. Furthermore, the New War mythology manifests itself in mainstream American culture as well. The increasing popularity of paramilitary "sports" like paint ball and target practice at shooting ranges, and of movies and pulp fiction that glorify violent (and often paramilitary/anti-establishment) rogue heroes, government rhetoric during Desert Storm (and during other military/political conflicts), and the availability and rise in sales of fully automatic assault weapons on the open market are but a few examples that illustrate the extent to which warrior tendencies are entrenched in mainstream American culture (see Gibson, 1994). As Swidler remarks, ideological movements that arise in unsettled periods, like Right-wing extremism, are not complete cultures because they depend to a great extent on broader cultural patterns to maintain their coherence. Thus, the relationship between culture and Right-wing extremism is relatively complex. Although further research is necessary to elucidate the connection between the two, the available evidence indicates that culture simultaneously constrains and channels social movements.

Summary and Observations

In this chapter I discussed the concept of culture from a performative angle, and I discussed Ted Gurr's theory of relative deprivation. I argued that it makes sense to adopt a performative view of culture as opposed to a Weberian conception of culture. Cultural changes are easier to measure with the former approach because the changes are more readily observable, whereas the latter perspective attempts the more difficult task of inferring change from less accessible mental processes. According to Ann Swidler (1995:39, italics added), "to think more powerfully about culture, we must entertain the possibility that culture's power is independent of whether or not people believe in it. . . . culture can have powerful influence if it shapes not individuals' own beliefs and aspirations, but their knowledge of how others will *interpret their actions*." The performative view does not deny the symbolic properties of culture. It stresses, however, that actions have symbolic properties that are salient in the construction of collective identities.

Also, I argued that as far as contemporary Right-wing extremism is concerned, one can justifiably use relative deprivation as a central (but not complete) explanation for the development of that particular movement in Germany and America. Without the grievances (whether economic, political, or ideational) that Right-wing extremists collectively perceive threaten their respective lifestyles, there would be little reason for them to join the movement in which they presently participate. Relative deprivation theory in and of itself, however, cannot fully explain the emergence of Right-wing movements. It provides a partial, albeit central explanation for movement emergence and development. In the next chapter I will mention other factors that influence the direction that movements follow in order to redress the relative deprivation their members experience.

The main point of this chapter is that one can tie many of the effects of culture on movement emergence to ideas that Gurr articulates in his theory of relative deprivation. Relative deprivation does not threaten the values and ideas that collectivities hold so much as it challenges their established lifestyles and practices. That observation indicates that one need not restrict oneself to the NSM paradigm in order to incorporate a cultural dimension in social movement analyses. Yet one may wonder whether I am practicing a form of cultural reductionism by emphasizing the importance of culture in social movement

research, and especially when I suggest that most variations of relative deprivation usually have cultural consequences. I do not believe that these emphases represent an agreement with cultural reductionism on my behalf. I contend that issues that pertain to identity and cultural practices often are at the core of contemporary Right-wing extremist grievances, but nowhere did I write that this is exclusively the case. Future research will determine the extent to which my hypothesis is correct.

What this chapter did address, however, is an issue that has recently come to the forefront of social movement research of all paradigms (see Hart, 1996; Johnston and Klandermans, 1995; Williams, 1995), and which scholars of contemporary Right-wing extremism have rarely contemplated. Hank Johnston and Bert Klandermans (1995) state:

> in terms of culture as an opportunity or constraint, we should try to answer questions about why and how movements are stimulated or frustrated by cultural characteristics of host societies. Also important are questions about why and how individuals abide by rules, codes, and institutions or (what is perhaps more interesting) why they do not. And . . . how cultural opportunities and constraints are related to structural opportunities and constraints will prove to be a key locus of future research. (pp. 22-23)

In this chapter I have sought provisional answers for some of the questions Johnston and Klandermans raise. I have devoted a great deal of attention to the role of culture in the emergence of Right-wing extremism because I think it is a concept that should be of primary importance to analyses from all paradigms. Thus, in a limited way it constitutes an interparadigmatic bridge. I will explore that cultural bridge in greater depth in Chapter 5. Yet I cannot overstate the degree to which my cultural model of Right-wing extremism constitutes a *tentative model*, rather than a definitive model, of the relationship between culture, relative deprivation (i.e., structural conditions), and movement emergence. Only further dialogue between researchers can confirm or invalidate the preliminary model I proposed in this chapter.

Also, I have especially theorized about how economic deprivation and culture interact in the formation of Right-wing extremist movements. I suspect that variations in the type, scope, and intensity of deprivations that collectivities experience will produce different cultural ramifications. Further research will have to determine whether that assumption is correct, and if so, *how* the type, scope, and intensity of deprivation affect a collectivity's culture. Likewise, future inquiries will have to determine what role (if

any) relative deprivation plays in the development of institutional collective action, and to what extent the grievance model applies to other contemporary NSMs.

Finally, this chapter shares some of the key weaknesses that critics have attributed to relative deprivation theory. That is to say, I infer individual and collective experiences of relative deprivation from macro trends. Although I and many other scholars suspect that there is a key link between macro phenomena, relative deprivation, and Right-wing extremism, only further social psychological investigations can confirm that assumption.

Chapter 5: Synthesis

In the previous chapters I identified, analyzed, and then criticized the core propositions of the new social movements paradigm, the resource mobilization paradigm, and the relative deprivation approach, and I discussed the relevance of each of these research paradigms for contemporary Right-wing extremism. In this chapter I will demonstrate the extent to which these paradigms are in fact compatible and complementary when one *modifies them slightly*. I will argue that in order to accurately explain the causes of Right-wing extremism, sociologists should adopt a paradigm that stresses the salience of grievances for movement emergence. *In the absence of grievances, there are few (if any) reasons for Right-wing extremism to exist*. Scholars should subsume the relevant propositions of the RM and NSM paradigms within a broader grievance model. The model also should contain a strong cultural component.

A Review of the Main Assumptions and Propositions

Assumptions

First, NSM and RD theory conceptualize social movements as noninstitutional collective behaviour, while the RM paradigm stresses their institutional orientation. As I noted in Chapter 2, however, movements can be either linear (i.e., they may possess associational forms, which often predispose them to institutional action) or fluid (i.e., they consist primarily of attitudinal currents, in which case they are more generally restricted to the non-institutional sphere). The dichotomy of course is artificial. Linear movements are likely to generate fluid effects (e.g., an environmental group may lead to an increase in environmental consciousness in the general population), while predominantly fluid movements may generate formal organizations, and hence coalesce into associational forms (e.g., feminism arguably began as a social current, but organized women's rights groups now speak in its name). It therefore only makes sense to broaden the lenses of each paradigm so that one can apply them to both linear/institutional movements as well as fluid/noninstitutional movements. The tools of certain paradigms may have greater relevance for certain movement forms, but that relevance should not prevent academics from applying

them to "unconventional" units of analysis whenever the circumstances warrant (e.g., applying RM theory to a mainly fluid movement). Thus, the institutional/noninstitutional orientation of the paradigms does not render them incompatible. Indeed, throughout this thesis I have demonstrated how one can apply the three paradigms to Right-wing extremism, which has both institutional/linear and noninstitutional/fluid aspects.

Second, NSM theory and RM theory are explicitly predicated on a conflict model of society. Although academics often include relative deprivation theory in the classical social movement research paradigm, which is dominated by consensus-based conceptions of society and social movements, that presumption is not evident in Ted Gurr's work. Gurr (1970:13) states that "value expectations are the goods and conditions of life to which people believe they are rightfully entitled." Deprivation occurs when there is a discrepancy between the individual's value expectations and what he or she perceives is the likelihood of satisfying these expectations. Gurr never claims that the goods and conditions that the "relatively deprived" fail to obtain are those that the "dominant society" fosters in its members. Moreover, the main proposition of relative deprivation is congruent with a conflict model of society (i.e., conflict erupts as a result of one's dissatisfaction with one's position *vis-à-vis* others). Thus, the three paradigms share compatible assumptions about the nature of society.

Third, each paradigm has assumptions about the rationality or irrationality of social movements. In Touraine's NSM scheme, because "true social movements" supposedly are the driving force behind improvements in society, then they must possess the ultimate form of rationality (which I presume Touraine thinks is value-rationality). Right-wing extremism, however, is an irrational movement in Touraine's scheme due to its "counter-productive" objectives. In contrast to Touraine's view of rationality, RM theorists view social movements as being primarily constructed on the basis of instrumental rationality. That is to say, they are allegedly motivated by immediate political or material rewards. I have criticized the above assumptions at length in Chapters 2 and 3. Both sets of assumptions are far too simplistic and they contain compromising ideological (NSM) or androcentric (RM) biases. Gurr acknowledges that civil strife (and to that I add social movements) contain both irrational and instrumental dimensions.

I advocate the position that social movement participants are no more or less rational than other members of society. Indeed, even the peculiar logic of Right-wing extremists is rational in its own way. It

is a coherent system of thought that simply has followed a more obscure evolutionary path than that of more widely accepted forms of logic. Furthermore, we must broaden our understanding of social movement rationality by paying equal attention to instrumental as well as value motivated action, and we must strive to develop a model of rationality that is as free from ideological and androcentric biases as possible. The development of a new model of rationality is beyond the scope of this thesis. Although Touraine in particular might disagree (for ideological reasons) with my suggestion that we adopt a new model of rationality, I contend that an alternative conceptualization of rationality can still be consistent with the main thrust of each of the three social movement paradigms, including the NSM paradigm.

Finally, the NSM paradigm assumes that there is a fundamental qualitative difference between movements of the post-industrial era and those of the industrial era. In Chapter 2 I argued that NSM theory exaggerates those differences. Also, to the extent that a qualitative distinction does exist between "new" and "old" movements, the distinction does not invalidate the application of RM and RD concepts in analyses of NSM emergence. Thus, once again, the assumptions of the three paradigms have a measure of compatibility when one alters these assumptions slightly.

Propositions

Touraine articulates the NSM paradigm in terms of two core propositions: 1) the emergence of NSMs in the Western world is related to the advent of a post-industrial society there; 2) all NSMs are involved in the same core societal conflict which has as its stake the identity of the contestants. Although I agree that concerns over identity have a great deal to do with the emergence of many NSMs (including Right-wing extremism), in Chapter 2 I refuted the notion that all NSMs are engaged in the same "core" societal conflict. The second proposition of NSM theory therefore is not something that we must take into account when contemplating a paradigmatic synthesis. Empirical support is available for the first proposition, and both the proposition and the supporting evidence are applicable to Right-wing extremism as well. *Yet one can analyze the role that post-industrial society has played in the emergence of contemporary Right-wing extremism in terms of the grievances its advent has generated. Thus, it makes sense for academics to study the impact that post-industrial society (and other macro changes, such as*

German unification) has had on Right-wing extremism from the more general framework of relative deprivation theory.

The central proposition of RD theory is that social movements arise in order to redress the collective grievances of their members. These grievances consist of discrepancies between peoples' value expectations and their perceived chances of obtaining what they believe they are legitimately entitled to and should realistically be capable of obtaining. Feelings of deprivation are the result of frustrated expectations. RM theorists charge that grievances are ubiquitous and that they do not explain how movements actually form, and hence have little explanatory power. In Chapters 3 and 4 I highlighted the weaknesses in that argument. RM analysts insist that changes in the availability of resources determine the likelihood that movements will arise. That hypothesis betrays the perspective's institutional/organizational bias. Yet just as RD theorists currently are unable to explain with RD concepts alone why grievances and relative deprivation do not always lead to the formation of social movements, RM analysts are unable to explain why social movements sometimes do not emerge even when resources are available in abundance and micro-structural conditions are ripe (Piven and Cloward, 1992:308-10).

As far as Right-wing extremism is concerned, it makes as much sense to subsume RM theory within an RD framework as it does to incorporate NSM theory within an RD framework. Stephen Kent (1982) suggests:

> relative deprivation theory can be embraced by resource mobilization theory when it can be demonstrated that a social movement or a social movement organization is based upon the grievances of presumed beneficiaries.
>
> All social movement organizations must attempt to mobilize their resources toward goals regardless of the reasons that cause the groups to form. Resource mobilization theory provides the most promising conceptual framework in which to analyse this mobilization process. It does not, however, provide an adequate discussion of the motives for the initial formation of particular groups, nor for their subsequent ideological positions. In some instances, a relative deprivation theory . . . provides the necessary theoretical complement. (pp. 539-540)

There is no fundamental incompatibility between the need for grievances to stimulate movement growth on the one hand, and the need for resources to pursue collective (and especially organized/institutional) action on the other. *Grievances provide a reason to mobilize resources.*

Also, the place that political discontent occupies in NSM theory, the political process perspective, and even RD theory also strengthens the bond between the three paradigms. RD theory acknowledges that

individuals and collectivities may experience relative deprivation because of a perceived lack of influence in the political sphere. Likewise, NSM theory stresses that movements arise out of discontent with the political process. The political process perspective postulates that movements arise when the aggrieved have no one to represent their interests at the institutional level. As I have illustrated in Chapter 3, grievances and political opportunities frequently are intertwined. Militant Right-wing extremist activity reached its peak in Germany when political opportunities and grievances converged. Moreover, political opportunities facilitate the mobilization of resources. When there is a destabilization of the political elites combined with an unwillingness or inability on the part of the authorities to repress insurgents, and when insurgents also have the support of elite allies, movement participants will perceive that conditions are favourable for action. Under favourable conditions, they will perceive that they can accomplish the most while risking the least. That perception is likely to inspire movements to mobilize. The circumstances surrounding the political opportunity might also lead sympathetic elites and members of the public to contribute material/financial and/or moral support to the movement, hence increasing its pool of resources.

The bottom line is that nothing in the assumptions and propositions of the various perspectives explicitly prohibits the use of ideas and concepts that come from other paradigms. Relative deprivation and its objective macro correlates (some of which are related to the advent of a post-industrial society in the West), political opportunities, and resource mobilization are all factors that influence the growth and activity cycles of Right-wing extremism. When one slightly modifies the assumptions of each paradigm whenever necessary (and in a way that does not contravene the basic principles of the respective approaches), it becomes evident that the propositions of relative deprivation theory, new social movement theory, resource mobilization theory, and political process theory are compatible as well as complementary. The following section will reveal that the theories are not just compatible at a "surface" level. They are equally compatible at the metatheoretical level.

Levels of Analysis and Metatheoretical Presuppositions

Constructivists and postmodernists probably would criticize my attempt to build an objectivist macro-level framework for the study of Right-wing extremism. They would argue that all knowledge is

socially constructed and socially situated, and that it is therefore futile to try to interpret any kind of phenomena in an "objective manner." True, it is upon the construction of social events as grievances, the construction of political opportunities, the construction of resources, and based upon the construction of the individual and collective identities they encompass, that movements act. Yet all of these constructions are dependent on the social context within which actors perform them (Johnston *et al.*, 1994:17). The dilemma of how to define that context obviously is difficult to resolve.

I adopt a pragmatic and practical, if debatable, approach to the constructivist/objectivist conundrum. I argue that objective facts exist in light of a *specific definition* of the phenomenon under observation (e.g., the number of immigrants who have entered a country at one point in time, or the number of people who are unemployed will be the same for all observers, regardless of who reads the figures). Whether one evaluates these facts in a positive or negative way is not the issue. What we can agree upon is that a certain phenomenon exists. Moreover, the way in which people provide consistent descriptions of the phenomenon in question grants that phenomenon a certain objective existence. At least, that is the assumption upon which I base this thesis. To deny the legitimacy of that conception of objectivity is to reduce sociological research to abstract argumentation over intellectual puzzles, and hence to drastically limit the potential sociology has for addressing problems one finds in the "real world."

Having said that, none of the frameworks I deal with in this study have a purely macro orientation. The NSM paradigm is concerned with the impact that post-industrial society has on the individual and collective construction of identity. RD theory relates macro trends to the individual perceptions of deprivation that influence collective action. Resource mobilization traditionally has been concerned with the "free rider problem," that is to say, with understanding the conditions under which individuals will opt to participate in a movement. Furthermore, RM theorists now pay attention to the way individuals and collective actors frame particular events and situations. Yet RM theory equally pays a great deal of attention to the dynamics of formal organizations as well as the availability of resources in society. Thus, NSM theory and RD theory have pronounced micro/macro affinities, the political process model is geared toward the meso/macro level, and RM theory has concerns at all three levels of analysis. Indeed, a complete explanation of movement emergence must take into account the micro (individual), meso

(institutional), and macro (societal) factors that are involved in movement generation and mobilization, as well as the linkages that exist between the three levels of analysis. Such an endeavour is of course beyond the scope of this project.

The most important observation for this thesis, however, is that all three perspectives have a compatible macro component with the same explanandum: they seek to understand what underlies the formation of social movements. Logically, one can subsume the micro and meso components of the respective approaches within the macro framework that I advocate here. Micro and meso concerns are distinct elements of the same puzzle.

At the metatheoretical level, one must not confuse objectivism with positivism. Positivist epistemologies "identify [social] science with the discovery of invariant laws that determine the relations among observable empirical facts or objective structures outside consciousness" (Morrow, 1994:54). Objectivism and positivism often are closely linked because of the roots they share in a realist ontology. Realism stresses that empirical facts exist "independently of our consciousness of them" (Morrow, 1994:53). Yet the framework that I am developing in this thesis does not constitute a search for invariant, ahistorical "laws of social movement formation." Indeed, scholars originally articulated the propositions of RM theory and NSM theory with reference to specific socio-historical contexts (RD theory is not quite as explicit about that). To the extent that researchers now apply those perspectives to different settings, they still must note the theoretical and empirical peculiarities and exceptions that they observe as a result of contextual differences.

Also, each of the paradigms I have surveyed has a micro/subjectivist dimension. In other words, although I have emphasized the objectivist features of each paradigm in this paper, each paradigm occupies a position that falls between subjectivism and objectivism because they recognize the significance that both individual and structural factors play in movement emergence. Thus, their ontologies also fall between realism and constructivism, and their action theories between determinism and voluntarism (see Morrow, 1994:53-55). In other words, the unstated assumptions of each paradigm as well as their overt assumptions and key propositions are compatible.

Yet in the end, paradigmatic consistency and metatheoretical compatibility basically are irrelevant. Adherence to the "rules of analysis" I discussed above merely perpetuate an "academic game." There is no compelling reason why we should strive for absolute and complete consistency between the assumptions of individual paradigms and those that become embedded in the synthetic paradigm. I agree with John Lofland (1996:178) that dogmatic attempts to maintain paradigmatic fidelity lead to sterile "theory-bashing." One can test propositions without having to endorse the entire theoretical program that initially generated them. One can apply all the testable propositions from each paradigm to any social movement, although some propositions obviously will have greater relevance for particular movements. As Lofland (1996) indicates:

> [The micro, meso, and macro variables that each paradigm generates] are exactly that: *variables*. They can be present or absent or present to one or another degree (i.e., in varying strength) in any given case. Because all [variables] can have different strengths from case to case, every specific case might well exhibit a somewhat different or even unique profile of the strength of each variable. But summed or otherwise composited over all [identified variables], each case will have a level of *composite causal* force behind it. So composited, some cases will have very low causal force while yet others may be very high.
>
> Cases with the *same* composite causal force that have led to SMO [or SM, i.e., social movement] formation may be composed of variables that are individually quite different in the strength of specific variables. But these differences are nonetheless composite in strength sufficient to form an SMO [or SM]. (p. 179, italics in original)

Lofland (1996) adds:

> Among more extreme possibilities of combinations of strengths of causal variables, it is possible that some or even perhaps many variables can be *zero* (i.e., they are absent), *but* enough *other* variables are of strengths sufficient to lead to SMO [or SM] formation despite zero strength or absent variables. (p. 179, italics in original)

That is exactly the logic I have relied on to construct the synthetic paradigm I propose. Each paradigm has its set of valid propositions and variables that are present in different degrees in any given movement. It therefore makes sense to group the propositions together, according to the levels of analysis for which one designs them. One can verify and confirm select propositions. Yet to my knowledge, scholars have never successfully validated an entire social research paradigm (e.g., consider what has befallen Marxism and functionalism).

The Role of Culture in a Synthetic Social Movement Research Paradigm

Cultural analysis should be a prominent aspect of research in all paradigms. In Chapter 3 I illustrated how symbolic and nonmaterial/noninstitutional incentives often are as relevant if not more relevant than material or institutional incentives for explanations of individual participation in social movements. Culture is an object of study that is intrinsic to the analyses that NSM theorists conduct. NSM theory conceives of contemporary social movements as non-institutional, often fluid actors that are primarily concerned with matters that pertain to the identity of their members, and hence with action that is aimed at the cultural sphere. It is noteworthy, however, that Touraine does not discuss culture or identity in anything but very general terms (i.e., by referring to historicity or civil society), and that one of the central concepts in his scheme therefore remains vague and ill-defined. Moreover, in spite of the fact that NSM theorists allege that contemporary movements are primarily active in the cultural sphere, they have neglected to specify how exactly culture affects social movements (cf. Johnston and Klandermans, 1995).

Culture never was an explicit component of RD theory. Nevertheless, I have re-articulated Gurr's relative deprivation theory and tied it to a performative view of culture. I argued in the previous chapter that relative deprivation often has cultural causes as well as cultural consequences. The performative perspective stresses that culture consists of collectively shared *practices* that persist over time. Macro trends (like the shift from an industrial to a post-industrial society and the consequences that shift has had in various sectors of the economy) that affect collectivities in adverse ways (e.g., the sudden decline of farming as an occupation in the U.S.) effectively jeopardize the relevance and even existence of their sometimes unique lifestyles and skills. Those who suffer from social changes that are beyond their control experience relative deprivation not only because of potential or actual financial losses, but especially because of the loss of the arena in which their lifestyle, skills, and daily rituals have a place and a well defined purpose. Social movements (and Right-wing extremism in particular) represent a collective backlash against the disappearance of the familiar and a struggle to (re-) establish what movement participants believe are ideal living conditions (in a cultural sense).

Thus, action contributes to identity ("doing is being"). The disappearance of the domain in which one can "act" and hence "be" prompts the identity concern that drives many NSMs. Johnston *et al.*

(1994:23, italics added) state that "the very nature of *grievances* for *NSMs merges them closely with the concept of identity*." I concur with that statement, especially since it implicitly (though perhaps unintentionally) suggests that the traditional grievance paradigm is still relevant today. Indeed, in light of the cultural spin one can give relative deprivation theory (which one can attempt to apply to any movement, regardless of whether it is "new" or "old"), it makes little sense to maintain a paradigm that is exclusively concerned with NSMs.

Also, I noted that the "dominant culture" does more than challenge alternative cultures. In some ways, it also channels them. That observation has particular relevance for RM theory. As Rhys Williams (1995:125) suggests, culture can have effects that are similar to those of material resources such as money and manpower. The successful framing or invocation of well known symbols or discourses can potentially mobilize a great number of adherents and it might attract new members to the movement, even in the absence of significant material resources. RM analysts may especially want to analyze the impact that the mobilization of symbolic resources has on cultural/noninstitutional movements, since traditional RM concepts frequently have limited applicability to movements that take those forms.

Culture has both micro and macro dimensions. It is a micro factor when movements invoke symbols and discourses in the master frames that they hope will resonate with the collective action frames of individuals. In other words, as with grievances, political opportunities, and resources, individuals must construct the significance of the symbols, discourses, and actions that movements invoke (e.g., see Aho, 1990: chap. 9). Culture is a macro factor to the extent that one can conceptualize it as ritual practices, discourses, and patterns of interaction that persist through time and that are shared by significant segments of society. Cultures can potentially extend across regions, states, continents, and perhaps even the globe.

I am not arguing that because culture is significant to social movement analyses from all paradigms, it necessarily unites those paradigms. Nevertheless, in light of the generally complementary and compatible orientations of the three paradigms, and in light of the distinct yet equally complementary role that culture has the potential to play in each approach, the "cultural bond" only adds to the feasibility and desirability of a paradigmatic synthesis.

Micro-Structural Factors and Right-Wing Extremism

Although grievances that are linked to drastic changes at the macro level, political opportunities, and the availability of resources all affect the emergence of Right-wing extremist movements, all of these factors fail to explain one key question. Why do Right-wing extremists choose a militant course of action and not a more "liberal" or "constructive" (for lack of better terms) strategy? Relative deprivation in and of itself does not inevitably force those who are dispossessed or who feel threatened by social currents to take hostile action against the State and/or ethnic minorities. Indeed, one can assume reasonably that the vast majority of people who experience relative deprivation do not end up participating in Right-wing extremist movements. How can we explain that lack of involvement in light of the propositions I discussed throughout this thesis? While the macro factors I discussed in the previous chapters identify the societal conditions that are conducive to the development of Right-wing extremism, I believe that one can find answers about (the lack of) involvement in Right-wing movements at the micro (and meso) level. Yet it is precisely because the answers are at a lower level of analysis than the one with which this thesis is concerned that I will discuss them only in brief and general terms.

One explanation is that individuals do not construct their grievances in a way that is conducive to the scapegoating of ethnic minorities and/or the State. In other words, the collective action frames of most individuals do not merge with the master frames of militant racist movements. A second explanation pertains to the micro-structural relationships in which people are enmeshed. "The argument is that people participate in movements . . . because their structural location in the world makes them available for participation" (Marx and McAdam, 1994:90). Recent research suggests that three micro-structural variables are particularly salient when it comes to predicting whether or not an individual will participate in a movement, and *in what kind of movement* the individual will participate. The three variables are: prior contact with an activist; membership in organizations; and an absence of "biographical constraints" (Marx and McAdam, 1994:90-92; also see Friedman and McAdam, 1992).

Prior contact with an activist is self-explanatory. The rationale here is that if one is personally acquainted with a movement activist, then one is more likely to be sympathetic to the activist's cause. That sympathy may be due to greater exposure to the aims and logic of the movement, or simply because of an

affective bond between the activist and the prospective member. The second variable is membership in organizations. In a way, it is an extension of the first variable. If the organization(s) one is a member of (e.g., church group, professional association, etc.) is sympathetic to the goals or rhetoric of the movement, linked to the movement, or ideologically compatible with the movement, then one is more likely to join that particular movement than any other. As with the first variable, participation is by and large due to "who you know." James Aho's (1990) data supports the hypotheses I have identified above:

> The patriots before us enlisted in the movement in a manner resembling the rational consumer in a monopolistic political market. That is, while they sought to maximize their private and public interests, as they understood them, their choices appear to have been structurally limited beforehand by the parameters of the situations in which they found themselves: by who their neighborhood acquaintances happened to be, where they happened to find themselves working, where they happened to be jailed, where they happened to be taken to worship by their parents, and, most importantly, by who their families happened to be and what their political orientations were. *Those denied access to patriot friends and coworkers, to "Aryan" cellmates, to fundamentalist fellow confessors, or to ultraconservative family members were not likely to become patriots themselves.* (pp. 209-10, italics added)

The third variable is an absence of biographical constraints. "Certain major life experiences such as child rearing, marriage, and full-time employment seem to reduce the likelihood of movement involvement by raising the costs and risks associated with activism" (Marx and McAdam, 1994:91). In Chapter 4, I attributed the overwhelmingly young age of German extremists and perpetrators of xenophobic violence to precisely those kinds of factors. Their lack of social bonds lowered the costs of participation in violent activism.

Ultimately, one's collective action frames and micro-structural relationships probably interact. It is highly likely that the micro-structural relationships in which one is enmeshed influence the "shape" and content of one's collective action frames, and hence the degree to which one might join a Right-wing extremist movement rather than another movement.

The dynamics of individual interaction and access to resources also determine how collectivities organize and how they subsequently establish the links and networks that make a movement possible. In other words, micro/meso analyses can provide a more satisfactory answer to the question of how Right-wing extremism has evolved into a national/international movement, which is a concern I raised in Chapter 1. Unfortunately, this thesis cannot provide a specific answer to that question due to the macro orientation

of the project. At the macro level, RM theory can only provide a very general explanation of and a context for the "how" of movement emergence. Further research is required to specify how micro factors contribute to movement emergence.

Summary and Observations

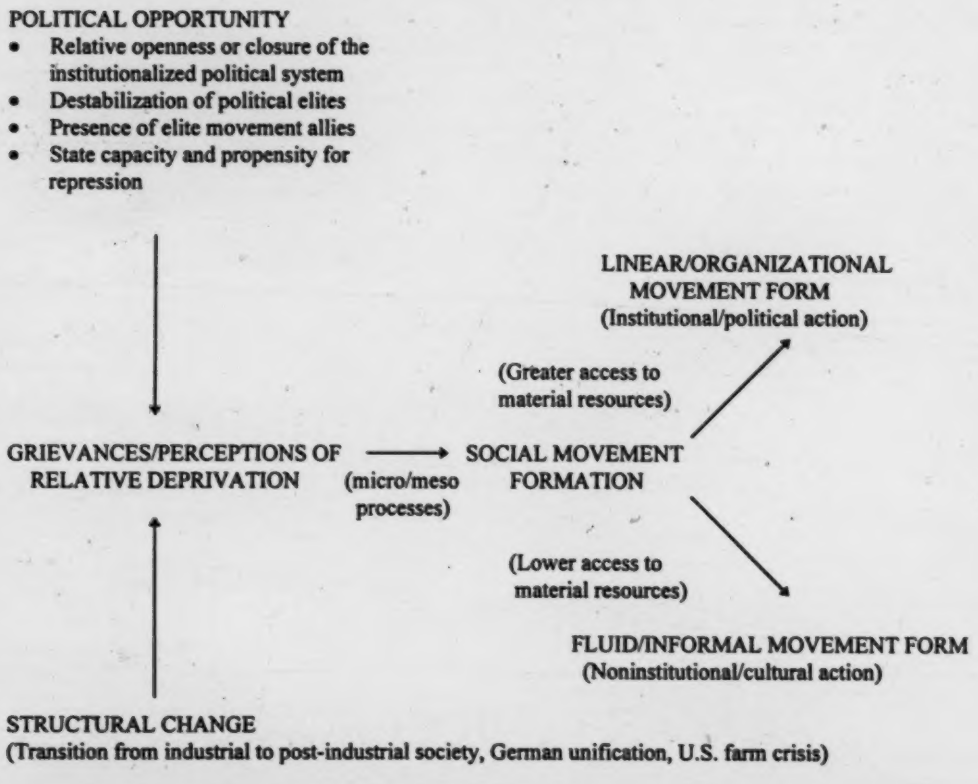
In this chapter I argued that one can indeed create a synthetic framework out of the NSM paradigm, the RM paradigm, and RD theory. Thus, I have confirmed one of the main hypotheses of this project. Although some of the assumptions and propositions of each paradigm had to undergo minor revisions (and I discarded one proposition of the NSM paradigm because it is untenable), those assumptions and propositions as well as the levels of analysis and the metatheoretical presuppositions of the various paradigms are both compatible and complementary. Also, the applicability of the concept of culture to the problems posed by each paradigm further increases their compatibility as well as their explanatory power.

One can subsume the micro and meso components of the three paradigms within the synthetic macro framework without difficulty. Moreover, I argued that for analyses of Right-wing extremism, scholars should subsume NSM theory and RM theory within a grievance-based model. One can describe the shift from industrial to post-industrial society that NSM theorists view as the ultimate cause of NSMs in terms of the new grievances and deprivations that the shift has produced. As far as RM theory is concerned, grievances provide a reason to mobilize resources.

One can sum up the general framework with which we end up in the following way (see Figure 1 below). First, the convergence of structural change and political opportunities contribute to the creation of grievances. Those grievances in turn provide the reason for individuals to form a movement or for a pre-existing movement to mobilize and/or grow.[1] Although Right-wing extremism plausibly can emerge due to grievances that are unrelated to structural change (see note 1 *supra*), those upon which this thesis has focused do constitute a reaction to structural changes. Second, some movements attempt to obtain different kinds of resources. Symbolic and material resources are equally important for formally organized/institutional movements, while symbolic resources are more important than material resources

for fluid/noninstitutional movements. Third, and finally, formally organized movements are more likely to target the political sphere, while fluid movements and those with an informal organizational structure primarily take action in the cultural sphere. Of course, the reader must keep in mind that the above

FIGURE 1: SYNTHETIC MODEL OF RIGHT-WING MOVEMENT EMERGENCE


POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY
• Relative openness or closure of the institutionalized political system
• Destabilization of political elites
• Presence of elite movement allies
• State capacity and propensity for repression
LINEAR/ORGANIZATIONAL MOVEMENT FORM
(Institutional/political action)
(Greater access to material resources)
GRIEVANCES/PERCEPTIONS OF RELATIVE DEPRIVATION
(micro/meso processes)
SOCIAL MOVEMENT FORMATION
(Lower access to material resources)
FLUID/INFORMAL MOVEMENT FORM
(Noninstitutional/cultural action)
STRUCTURAL CHANGE
(Transition from industrial to post-industrial society, German unification, U.S. farm crisis)

framework takes as a given the fact that individuals must construct the significance that each stage in the model has for their interests and actions. Also, I noted that although the macro elements of my synthetic framework addresses the societal conditions that are conducive to the growth of Right-wing extremism, it cannot explain why individuals pursue particular courses of action rather than others (e.g., join Right-wing

extremist movements or perpetrate acts of xenophobic violence rather pursue more "constructive" alternatives). I strongly suggested that one can find the answer to that question in the interrelation between a person's collective action frames and the micro-structural relationships in which they are enmeshed. Because what I have articulated is a theoretical model, only further research can determine whether it constitutes a valid explanation for the growth of Right-wing extremism, and of other social movements in general.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Three main questions guided the focus of this study. The first was whether one can conceptualize contemporary Right-wing extremism as a social movement, and hence whether one can analyze the phenomenon by referring to the social movement literature. The answer to that question is a definite "yes." The second question was whether allegedly context-specific social movement theories can in fact transcend the contexts for which academics originally articulated them. I investigated that question by referring to specific examples of Right-wing extremism both in Germany and the U.S. I found that each of the three social movement paradigms explained different aspects of Right-wing extremism, and that one can apply them equally well to the German and American contexts. Thus, my answer to the second question also is affirmative. The third question was whether one can create a synthetic social movement research paradigm by combining the central elements of the new social movements paradigm, the resource mobilization paradigm, and relative deprivation theory. The answer to that question as well is affirmative. The three paradigms have complementary and compatible assumptions, propositions, levels of analyses, and metatheoretical presuppositions.

Right-wing extremism meets the majority of the criteria that some scholars claim distinguish "new social movements" from other movements or collective actors. With the exception of their ultra-conservative rather than liberal ideologies and their violent pre-dispositions (the latter of which does not characterize all Left-wing NSMs anyway), Right-wing extremist movements are similar to Left-wing NSMs in many other respects. As with the participants in many Left-wing NSMs, Right-wing extremists are primarily preoccupied with a quest for and defense of symbolic space and a distinct identity. They are more active in the cultural than the political sphere. At the societal level, the changes that have accompanied the shift from an industrial to a post-industrial society in the West have spurred the identity quests that drive many NSMs, including Right-wing extremism.

Like other social movements, Right-wing extremism has both fluid and linear forms. To the extent that it is linear (i.e., organizations represent the movement), the movement must mobilize resources (money, materials, and members) in order to survive. Due to the illegal nature of their activities and the

poor socioeconomic conditions of their adherents (the latter is especially notable in the U.S.), Right-wing movements often rely on illicit activities to fund their operations.

The available data strongly support the application of the political process model to German Right-wing extremism. Right-wing activity in post-War Germany reached its peak in 1991-1992 at a time when there was a destabilization of the political elites over the alleged "foreigner crisis," the police and the judiciary were unwilling or unable to repress the insurgents, and no party addressed the concerns of the general population in a satisfactory way. Also, neo-Nazi groups had discrete support from some of Germany's social elites. Although the American data is more sketchy, and the conclusions we can draw from it therefore are more tentative, the available evidence suggests that the political process model to a certain extent also explains trends in Right-wing activity in the U.S.

The relative deprivation model of collective behaviour fell into disfavour when the resource mobilization paradigm began to dominate the field in the 1970s. RM theorists argued that grievances are ubiquitous and therefore cannot be a primary factor in movement emergence. Yet the evidence upon which critics base that argument is flawed. This study has demonstrated that in the case of Right-wing extremism, one generally can correlate individual perceptions of grievances with objective indicators of social change. Indeed, whether it is experienced in economic, political, or ideational terms, collective experiences of relative deprivation are a primary cause of Right-wing activity. In Germany and the U.S., Right-wing extremists perceive a discrepancy between their current and past situations, between their current situation and the better situation of others in their respective societies, and/or between what they are able to achieve and what they think they are legitimately entitled to and realistically capable of achieving. Factors that contribute to these discrepancies are objectively measurable. Moreover, I asserted that one can explain the impact of the shift from industrial to post-industrial society in terms of a relative deprivation framework.

Culture is a concept that transcends paradigms. According to the performative approach, culture is the behavioural component of identity. Relative deprivation frequently is due to cultural tensions, and it has cultural consequences. That is to say, dramatic and sudden social changes can lead to the perception that one's lifestyle is threatened. The perceived threat in turn leads one to reassert one's lifestyle and cultural habits (and hence identity), sometimes in a slightly modified and even exaggerated fashion. Yet the

proximity between the "dominant" and the insurgent culture does not only generate conflict. To a certain extent, the insurgent culture requires (and benefits from) some of the patterns, rituals, symbols, and discourses of the dominant culture in order to become a coherent ideological system. In RM terms, movements can benefit from the invocation of widely shared discourses and symbols. Thus, the cultural dimension of social movement research and its cross-paradigm relevance only increases the feasibility of a synthetic paradigm.

In the end, the model that we derive from the three paradigms is based on convergence. Right-wing extremism is the product of a convergence between grievances and appropriately framed political opportunities. Once movement actors have defined grievances and identified a political opportunity, they may attempt to muster and then mobilize resources, especially if their movement will increasingly adopt an organizational form and will pursue action at the institutional level. Grievances provide a movement with a reason to mobilize resources. For fluid movements, however, material resources generally are of secondary importance. That secondary importance is because fluid movements are by and large attitudinal currents that circulate in a society's cultural sphere. Finally, micro-level factors such as prior contact with an activist, membership in sympathetic organizations, and an absence of biographical constraints determine the likelihood that one will participate in Right-wing activity instead of seeking other means of redress for grievances. Micro-level factors also determine how the links and networks that undergird a movement are established. The greatest asset of a synthetic social movement research paradigm is not the paradigm *per se*. Rather, it is the way it enables investigators to test simultaneously the different yet compatible and complementary propositions that each individual paradigm has generated.

Implications of the Study

Scholarly Implications

This study places in doubt the validity of a macro-level NSM paradigm. First, one can reinterpret the effects of post-industrialization in terms of a broader grievance model. Second, the paradigm exaggerates the differences between NSMs and older movements. Many NSMs have linear as well as fluid

forms, and are therefore analyzable from a RM perspective, like all other organized movements. Third, one can equally subsume identity concerns within a relative deprivation framework (i.e., in terms of discrepancies in ideational coherence). It is important that the reader note that asking how individual and collective actors construct their identities, which has been the main focus of much NSM research (e.g., see Melucci, 1989), is not the same thing as asking why and/or how social movements emerge in the first place. Constructivism can address most adequately the first question, while the second usually entails macro-level speculation. Even then, no reason exists why one should restrict constructivist research to NSMs. All movements have a collective identity, whether they are "NSMs" or "other" movements. In light of the above criticisms, I contend that the development of a distinct NSM paradigm is unwarranted.

Moving to another topic, a synthetic paradigm will provide the theoretical direction that is lacking in many sociological investigations of militant Right-wing extremism. To the extent that researchers accept the model of Right-wing extremism I propose in this thesis, social movement research has gone "full circle" by once again emphasizing the relevance of grievances as *primary* causes of movement emergence. The adoption of a synthetic paradigm should foster dialogue between researchers from competing traditions.

Practical Implications

This thesis suggests that militant Right-wing activity especially occurs in and targets the cultural sphere rather than the political sphere (although extremists sometimes are active in the latter sphere as well [e.g., see Diamond, 1995:262-63; Husbands, 1991:93, 99-100]). In other words, they assert their lifestyles without debating about the legitimacy of these lifestyles in the political arena. In a sense, Right-wing extremism arguably poses a greater threat when it occurs to a wider extent in the cultural sphere than in the political sphere. It is easier to monitor and counter its potentially disastrous effects via an open dialogue in the political sphere. In the cultural sphere, the effects of a gradual and subtle diffusion of xenophobic thought and practice may be more insidious, enduring, and potentially damaging to a liberal-democratic society if observers fail to detect and deal with its symptoms (and root causes) at an early stage (cf. Ferrarotti, 1994).

Providing children and youths with an in-depth education concerning the roots and impacts of racism and scapegoating may be an effective, though costly, time-consuming, and by no means original strategy for dealing proactively with xenophobic sentiments. That strategy presumably would be more successful among children and youths than among adults because education involves the promotion of "desirable" patterns of action. The patterns of action of the former arguably are more malleable than those of the latter due to the amount of time the respective patterns have had to crystallize. The process probably would have to be on-going in order for it to have a chance of being successful (i.e., it would have to follow children and adolescents for as long as they are in the educational system). Even then, no guarantees exist that such a program would succeed.

How one addresses xenophobic sentiments in the adult population is more complicated. Although the institution of a more authoritarian government and behavioural code probably would please many if not most Right-wing extremists (provided the government's policies also matched their interests and philosophies), and it might partially resolve the cultural crisis they experience, that tactic likely would create a cultural and political backlash among the more liberal and progressive German and/or American citizens. Moreover, and of particular relevance to the American context, authoritarianism would not necessarily restore the domains to which the cultural skills (e.g., farming) of a substantial proportion of Right-wing extremists are most suited. Thus, there are no easy (and democratically viable) solutions to the cultural crisis that adult extremists in the U.S. and Germany are experiencing.

Following the release in 1993 of the first interim report of the Campaign Against Violence and Hostility Toward Foreigners, Germany's CDU government began to implement educational tactics that have the aim of countering Right-wing extremism and xenophobia:

> Schools were the focus of enhanced efforts to combat xenophobic violence. Beyond promoting programs to improve social behavior, instill an interest in and teach tolerance, and instill a sense of responsibility, officials identified various special programs to promote the integration of foreigners. Governmental support was provided to the Federal Parents' Council, representing 10 million parents of schoolchildren, in support of a conference [titled] Violence: A Phenomenon of Our Society. New antiviolence curricular materials were prepared and widely disseminated, and schools were all charged with addressing relevant issues in the classroom and in school-based nonclassroom events. Finally, teacher-training leaders also took note of the antixenophobia agenda. (Kagedan, 1997:122)

Also, the government called on the media to "reflect on the manner in which hate incidents were covered so as to ensure that the potential for inadvertently encouraging such behavior was minimized" (Kagedan, 1997:122; see Bjørgo, [1993b], and Esser and Brosius, [1996], for theoretical and empirical analyses of the relationship between the media and xenophobic violence).

Yet contradictions remain in the government's attitude toward foreigners. Late in 1992 the government tightened Germany's immigration laws, thus implying that foreigners were in fact at least partially responsible for the crisis that Germany faced. German citizenship laws still prevent most foreigners from acquiring German citizenship unless they undergo a lengthy naturalization process which requires that they forego their claims to citizenship in a country other than Germany. Those conditions effectively relegate foreigners to a permanent class of "others," of second-class citizens. Moreover, Ian Kagedan's (1997) interviews with the officials of government and nongovernmental organizations reveal that:

> generally speaking, Germans do not see their country as an immigration country. Some even take the view that immigration is, in effect, a peaceful method of territorial occupation. Multi-culturalism is a widely denied, or at least ignored, reality. (p. 134)

The contradictions in the government's attitude toward foreigners are not completely illogical. It is plausible that the government wishes to maintain an official distinction between Germans and "others," and that it might still make use of the latter as scapegoats when political circumstances "warrant it," while nevertheless seeking to minimize the level of physical violence that individuals and groups visit upon ethnic (and other) minorities. It is too early to tell how effective the government's anti-hate/anti-violence initiatives are. On the one hand, violence against foreigners has steadily decreased since 1993. Whether that decease is due to government initiatives or other factors has yet to be determined. On the other hand, in Chapter 1 I stated that nonviolent offences (e.g., propaganda) and anti-Semitic offences continued to increase after 1992. Anti-Semitic offences did not decline until 1994, and even then they remained "as high as the 1990-91 levels" (Watts, 1997:68; also see Kagedan, 1997:116-17). Whether that wave of anti-Semitic violence was a result of political opportunities, in much the same way that violence against foreigners was a product of political factors, is unclear.

I suspect that given the degree to which racism is institutionalized in American society, and given the socioeconomic disparities that characterize the various racial and ethnic groups there, educational initiatives in the U.S. probably would face greater barriers to success than in Germany. Finally, the goal of educational initiatives should not be to ostracize Right-wing extremists. We must remember that many of these individuals have fallen on dire circumstances and are reacting in desperate ways to overwhelming changes. We must attempt to find methods to reintegrate those individuals in society and to soften the impact that abrupt social changes have on vulnerable collectivities, however difficult that task may be.

Suggestions for Further Research

In light of the prediction that movement adherents, academics, and law enforcement officials have made that Right-wing violence will escalate siginificantly in the near future (Dyer, 1997:244-48), it is urgent that social scientists advance the state of knowledge on Right-wing extremism. The synthetic model I proposed in this thesis does not answer all the questions that pertain to the emergence and development of Right-wing extremist movements. At this stage, it is but a tentative and theoretical model. Further research will need to verify the extent to which it applies to specific organizations and sub-movements (e.g., militias, neo-Nazism, Identity Christianity, etc.), as well as to other social movements in general. I suspect that ideational and political grievances, rather than economic ones, are more salient factors in the emergence of many contemporary Left-wing movements.

Right-wing extremism has existed in post-War Germany since at least two decades before unification and in the U.S. for well over a century (and hence well before the farm crisis of the 1970s/1980s). Researchers will need to determine the extent to which a synthetic paradigm can explain the existence of these groups (and the extent to which they possessed the networks that make a linear movement possible, or conversely, the degree to which they represented sporadic and isolated phenomena). Also, I did not address why anti-Semitic offences escalated in Germany while the general population, the media, and the political elites framed "foreigners" as the country's main problem. Future investigations will need to establish whether a synthetic paradigm can answer that question.

Sociologists must find ways to measure the scope and intensity of grievances in order to formulate and test propositions that concern the relationship between those dimensions of grievances and the emergence of social movements. Equally important, sociologists must make the link between macro indicators and experiences of relative deprivation explicit via social psychological research on the topic.

The resource mobilization aspect of the synthetic paradigm also faces unique challenges. Right-wing groups acquire many of their material and financial resources by illicit means. It is therefore difficult to obtain precise information on the access these groups have to resources, and hence on the correlation between resource availability and movement emergence. Likewise, RM theorists should investigate the degree to which the Internet facilitates or altogether supplants the traditional resource needs and mobilization tactics of movement organizations, and whether it decreases the need for formal organization altogether. It is plausible that in the future social movements will increasingly take on fluid forms. RM research therefore should elucidate whether the structural changes that correspond to the advent of a post-industrial society in the West have produced changes in the levels of access collectivities have to resources.

A complete analysis of the emergence and development of Right-wing extremist movements also will require that we specify the relationship between factors that operate at the three levels of analysis (micro, meso, macro [for suggestions on research problems concerning Right-wing extremism that require a combination of levels of analysis, see Eatwell, 1997:179-80]). The cross-national diffusion of movement ideas and the effects of the mass media on Right-wing activity are subjects that are especially worthy of consideration in multi-level analyses. Finally, this thesis has stressed the similar impacts that a broad class of social factors have had on Right-wing extremism in Germany and the U.S. It stressed the similarities in order to demonstrate the applicability of allegedly context-specific theoretical concepts and propositions to Right-wing extremism in different locales. Yet social forces do not manifest themselves uniformly across social contexts. The differential impact of social factors on Right-wing extremist movements and the societies within which these movements operate therefore requires further historical and comparative exploration if we are to understand fully the causes of Right-wing extremism.

ENDNOTES

Chapter 1

1: I am aware that the distinction I make between "radical" and "extreme" is not entirely clear, but I am merely drawing on the literature.

2: As a result of the conviction of six of its members as well as its leader (James Ellison) in 1985, the CSA no longer exists (Cox, 1992:298; Zellner, 1995:53).

3: See the typology of Right-wing extremists at the end of this chapter for a definition of the term "skinheads."

4: Roberta Garner and John Tenuto (1997) list a number of studies in their annotated bibliography on social movement theory and research that they suggest are on Right-wing extremism. Most of the studies they cite, however, either deal with institutional Right-wing extremism (i.e., they are political studies), or they are journalistic accounts of Right-wing militance.

5: Dieter Rucht (1991b) makes no mention of a debate in German academic circles over whether Right-wing extremism is a social movement or not in his survey of the state of the art in West German social movement research up to 1991.

6: An evaluation of the synthetic appeal of Turner and Killian's (1972) emergent norm perspective is, however, beyond the scope of this project.

7: The reader should treat the typologies contained within those works with caution. For example, Marks (1996:95) mistakenly includes Ben Klassen's Church of the Creator as part of the Christian Identity movement (cf. Kaplan, 1997:37-42).

Chapter 2

1: Some contention exists in the NSM literature concerning the role of social class in contemporary movement emergence and action. Klaus Eder (1993, 1995) claims that social class is still an implicit rallying point for movement mobilization. Jan Pakulski (1993, 1995) takes the opposite, and I think, better argued position.

Until recently, most sociological accounts of the rise of Nazism and fascism linked the emergence of these movements to middle class protest (Eatwell, 1997:169-72; Pakulski, 1993:135-38, 1995:58-61). Yet Eatwell and Pakulski both cite evidence that suggests support for fascism and Nazism transcended class cleavages. The social and biographical characteristics of the ideologically dedicated contemporary German Right-wing activists indicate that they hail from all backgrounds (Hueglin, 1997:146; Willems, 1995:170). In America, the records of indicted Right-wing terrorists suggest that they are primarily from the lower strata of society, with the exception of the generally wealthier and better educated leaders (Smith, 1994:51). Whether in the U.S. or Germany, Right-wing extremists do

not associate specifically on the basis of a common class background, nor are their activities pursued with class interests in mind.

2: Of course, as the respective totals indicate, the analytical categories of Right-wing/racist violence in Germany and terrorism in America are not compatible. That incompatibility is due in part to the fact that American authorities have never had the need to distinguish the ideological background of hate crimes, whereas German authorities consider this a matter of greater importance in light of their country's history. Thus, American hate crime statistics rarely reveal the offender's ideological background, nor his or her racial/ethnic background (i.e., Blacks who have attacked Whites, or Orientals who have attacked Hispanics, may also be represented in these statistics. Hate crime statistics, when they are counted at all, do not simply constitute a count of offenses perpetrated by "Whites" against "others" [*Canada and the World Backgrounder*, 1996]). Yet in America, observers sometimes label racist violence and hate crimes as acts of domestic terrorism (Hamm, 1993; Levin and McDevitt, 1993:ix). The FBI officially defines terrorism as "the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social goals" (quoted in Smith, 1994:6). Brent Smith's methodology enabled him to identify all cases of official terrorism that occurred in the U.S. in the 1980s that resulted in indictments. Smith reviewed all available terrorist case files for his study. Thus, "case files were examined for approximately 90 percent of the known indictments against domestic terrorists from 1980 - 1989. *The data set includes all of the indicted right-wing terrorists . . .*" (Smith, 1994:16, italics added). In the American context, Smith's study provides more reliable information on the ideological and biographical backgrounds of convicted Right-wing offenders than would hate crime statistics. Indeed, all Right-wing domestic terrorists that were indicted in the U.S. between 1980 - 1989 were convicted for crimes they committed as members of White supremacist organizations (Smith, 1994:14).

3: Ruud Koopmans acknowledges that it is difficult to differentiate between racist and explicitly Right-wing violence in official statistics. Yet he claims that "the overlap between both forms of violence is in fact quite large, with racist violence being the more inclusive category, encompassing most extreme right violence. A second, pragmatic , reason to analyze these two forms of violence simultaneously is that, due to the covert, anonymous, and 'speechless' nature of most of this violence, it is in practice very hard to separate them" (Koopmans, 1995b:185-86).

4: Germany's Second World War Nazi regime also proscribed homosexuality. The Nazi elites purged the SA (Stormtrooper corps) in June 1934 on the pretext that they were morally corrupt, after someone had reported that they had found the commander of the corps (Ernst Roehm) in bed with another man (Matthias Zimmer, personal communication, 3 March 1998).

5: The cleavage between Christianity and National Socialism does not preclude some groups, such as the Aryan Nations, from combining elements of both in their practices and teachings, nor does it prevent inter-group cooperation.

6: For more details on the post-unification German "identity crisis," see the various essays in Muller *et al.*, (1996).

7: According to Alberto Melucci (1989:58), social movements are in and of themselves "networks of meaning." The existence and form of a movement, he alleges, diffuse knowledge about alternative meanings and practices to the public.

8: For more information on changes in demographic and employment trends in the FRG from the beginning of the post-War period up until the post-unification era, see Berghoff (1996).

9: It is worth noting that in the previous quote, Hueglin equates new social movements with resentment towards "outsiders" and "losers." This characteristic is evidently more representative of Right-wing extremism than Leftist NSMs. One must infer from the above citation that Hueglin views Right-wing extremism as a "new social movement."

10: For a more detailed review of critical remarks on Touraine's method of sociological intervention, see Rucht (1991a:376-79).

11: For a more complete understanding of action theory, see Touraine (1969; 1973; 1981; 1985; 1987; 1988; 1991; 1992). See Cohen (1982:211-28; 1985:695-705), Hannigan (1985), Rucht (1991a), and Scott (1990:60-69; 1991) for reviews and critiques of Touraine's work.

12: For more on the constructivist approach to social movements, see Melucci (1985, 1989, 1992, 1994, 1995a, 1995b). For a critique of Melucci's approach, see Bartholomew and Mayer (1992).

Chapter 3

1: Many American Right-wing extremists (e.g., the Posse Comitatus) claim that ZOG currently manipulates the U.S. government, and is responsible for the institution of such "anti-Constitutional" measures as federal taxation and attempts to restrict gun ownership. They swear loyalty to the Constitution as it was articulated by America's founding fathers, which they allege does not grant the government federal taxation privileges or the right to legislate gun ownership, among other things (see Corcoran, 1990; Sargent, 1995:343-350).

2: Note the relevance of this passage to Right-wing extremism, which is a movement that gravitates on occasion toward violent activism. Also, one can construe Right-wing extremism (especially the American version) as a movement that is geared toward rebellion, although it has not yet launched a widespread campaign of violence. Nevertheless, the actions of The Order, the Oklahoma City bombing, and the CSA conspiracy to contaminate the water supplies of two major U.S. cities (among other examples), and the socio-political aims of Right-wing extremists, arguably represent evidence that these extremists are participating in a rebellion, albeit one that has been waged to date on a limited scale.

3: William Gamson (1990) claims that lower-stratum challengers are short-lived and produce insignificant results unless they have the backing or organizations that have considerable clout and a high resource mobilization potential. He implies that this explains why collective action that was not endorsed by formally organized groups did not appear in his "representative" sample of fifty-three insurgent collectives that challenged the American state between 1800 and 1845 (Gamson, 1990:27). Gamson's position effectively explains why the RM paradigm focuses almost exclusively on formal SMOs and institutional action. Gamson's oft quoted study allegedly supports the thesis that above all else, a movement requires resources if it is to emerge and survive.

4: For a greater understanding of the German political process, see Conradt (1989).

5: Koopmans acknowledges that "radical Right" parties differ significantly across national contexts, and that one must therefore interpret comparative data with caution. The same goes for data on Right-wing or racist violence.

6: The constitutional court can only ban an organization after the federal government has requested that it do so.

7: One may attribute the lack of police intervention to confusion and a lack of communication between the various police forces and their superiors who issued the orders to "stand put." If one accepts that argument as a valid explanation for the lack of police intervention, then little proof exists that the police were intentionally lenient with the neo-Nazis. Yet German reporter Michael Schmidt captured on film a neo-Nazi march in Dresden on 20 October, 1990, where the local police chief declared that the assembly was legal (it was registered according to the statutes governing assemblies), but denied that it involved neo-Nazis or the prohibited Nazi chants and salutes, even as the skinhead participants openly displayed those very chants and salutes. According to Schmidt (1993):

> [Police Commissioner] Wunsch insists on the nonexistence of what's happening before our very eyes. "No one has done anything to identify himself as such [as a neo-Nazi], in the sense that – "
> "Yes, but people are yelling 'Heil Hitler' all over the place!"
> "Where?" he says. Then he looks around, puffs out his cheeks a little, and shrugs his shoulders, as if he can't make out – right in front of us – the men stretching out their arms in the Hitler-salute. The press is photographing everything, but the skinheads act as if there wasn't a single policeman in sight – even though the Hitler-salute is a criminal offense. I notice that my cameraman is still filming the police commissioner, so I narrate the scene to him. "There in front, even for the photographers, they're making the Hitler-salute. That's unambiguously neo-Nazi, isn't it?"
> "*I still have not noticed any such thing, I must tell you*!" (pp. 74-75, italics added)

Some East German skinheads claim that they are on good terms with the police. One skinhead states that "once or twice a week, our friends from the police come. Nice guys, they understand us." The local police also give them tips: "'do what you want, but don't let anyone see you and don't leave any traces'" ("Hanna," quoted in Ostow, 1995:95).

Whichever way one looks at it (i.e., police confusion/orders from above, or police sympathy), the point remains the same: Right-wing activists perceived that they had a good chance of "getting away" with their acts.

8: The Viking Youth (*Wiking Jugend*) has existed in the FRG since the 1950s (M. Behrend, 1995:210).

9: Pat Buchanan's rhetoric is particularly laced with anti-Semitic and conspiratorial theories that are worthy of the extreme Right (see Scheinberg, 1997:69). For example, he has on several occasions spoken about the U.S. Congress as "Israeli occupied territory," which is reminiscent of the extreme Right's references to the Zionist Occupation Government (Scheinberg, 1997:56).

Chapter 4

1: Robin Ostow (1995:100) writes: "the neo-Nazi organizations provide a structure and legitimization for his violence, but Hackie worries about being used by them."

2: Odinism is a modern religion that reveres the Norse pantheon and which has attracted adherents from the White supremacist constellation (see Kaplan, 1996).

3: For details on hypothetical patterns of relative deprivation, see Gurr (1970:46-58).

4: The reverse may be true for Right-wing extremists. That is to say, they may obtain psychological satisfaction by seeking *authoritative* interactions with other individuals and groups.

5: East Germans also faced a severe housing crisis following unification (see H. Behrend, 1995:18-19).

6: For further criticisms of relative deprivation theory, see Gurney and Tierney (1982).

7: Even the articulation of new cosmogonic myths and discourses are part of an action system because they represent specific forms of *observable behaviour*.

8: The *Verfassungsschutz* estimate that dedicated militant Right-wing extremists come disproportionately from the former GDR, and that the neo-Nazi scene in the East is better organized, and hence more active (Childs, 1996:228).

Chapter 5

1: It is conceivable that a political opportunity and a motive for movement action may arise in the absence of objectively correlated grievances. In other words, a collective actor or political party might generate grievances by framing its rhetoric in a convincing and inflammatory manner. Yet the illustrations I have used throughout this thesis suggest that contemporary Right-wing extremism frequently is related to objectively verifiable crises.

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